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LAST ISSUE

Near East & South Asia

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Friday
26 July 1996

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Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-96-145 *26 July 1996*

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Inter-Arab Affairs

Inter-Arab Affairs: Syria, Jordan Accused of Collaborating Against 'Afghan Arabs'

MM2507104496 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 25 Jul 96 pp 1, 6

[Report by Muhammad Salah: "Syrian-Jordanian Security Cooperation Led to 'Afghan Arabs' Arrest"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo — The issue of the "Afghan Arabs" arrested in Syria recently is still reverberating. A spokesman for the Islamic Information Bureau, a body comprising Arab Islamists living in European states, has accused the authorities in Syria and Jordan of collaborating with one another "in order to offer the Islamists as a sacrifice to the Americans and the Israelis."

The spokesman revealed to AL-HAYAH over the telephone yesterday new details about the arrests of the Afghan Arabs in Syria. He said that "an Egyptian Islamist whose nom de guerre is Abu-Hamzah al-Qari was arrested with a Jordanian some four months ago while trying to enter Jordanian territory, and the Jordanian authorities tortured al-Qari and forced him to reveal the names and whereabouts of his colleagues in Syria." The spokesman added that "the Syrian-Jordanian rapprochement on the periphery of the Arab summit held in Cairo last month resulted in security cooperation between the two countries, following which Jordan submitted to Syrian officials a list of Egyptian, Algerian, and Syrian Islamists residing in Syria." The spokesman pointed out that "the campaign against Arab Islamists in Syria started after the Syrian authorities were notified of their names and whereabouts."

The spokesman stressed that "the detainees in Syria and Jordan are being severely tortured. He called on human rights organizations and the Arab Lawyers Union to swiftly intervene to rescue them and prevent them from being extradited to their countries lest their lives be exposed to danger. He stressed that none of those arrested has been sentenced to death or prison." He said that "all of them are seekers of knowledge, have not violated Syrian or Jordanian laws, and are legal residents." He pointed out that "the Syrian authorities started the campaign following the arrest of an Egyptian whose name was mentioned in al-Qari's confessions. The former was forced to reveal the Arab Islamists' whereabouts and the mosques frequented by them." As is known, the Jordanian authorities extradited to Egypt in 1994 a leading Jihad figure named Majdi Kamal, who had been sentenced in absentia to life imprisonment with hard labor in the Bani Suwayf city incidents.

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Returns From 'Positive and Fruitful' Syria Visit

JN2607113396 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1100 GMT 26 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat returned home at noon today following an official visit to Syria during which he met with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad.

Upon arrival at the Presidential Offices in Gaza, the president told journalists that his meeting with President al-Asad was positive and fruitful. He said discussion during the meeting focused on all issues of concern to the Arab nation and the future of the regional peace process following the recent changes in Israel.

His excellency said the talks also dealt with the need to coordinate positions to ensure that the peace process can arrive at its just and comprehensive goals, and to protect Jerusalem, especially after yesterday's attempts by settlers to storm the holy mosque in Jerusalem.

Palestinian Affairs: Legislative Council Denounces al-Aqsa Mosque Decision

JN2507163496 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1300 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Legislative Council Speaker Ahmad Quray', alias Abu-'Ala', denounced the terrorist settlers and members of the so-called Temple Mount Faithful for storming the courtyard of the holy al-Aqsa Mosque, asserting that this provocative Israeli step will antagonize Muslims all over the world.

This came at a news conference given by Quray' in the aftermath of the special meeting held by the Council in light of the holy al-Aqsa Mosque incidents. More details from correspondent Rashid Hilal [in Ramallah].

[Begin recording] [passage omitted] [Quray'] This [Israeli Court ruling] makes me question the feasibility of negotiations with Israel, which continues its violations and tries to impose certain facts in order to determine the nature of the final-status negotiations. This cannot be tolerated at all. Hence, the Legislative Council dealt with this issue as a problem created by Israel's policy toward Jerusalem. On Tuesday morning, the Council will also discuss the issue of settlements, as plans are under way to request the executive authority to study the feasibility of negotiations if Israel continues its settlement policy and its violations in Jerusalem. If these policies continue, the negotiations will be useless and will have no meaning other than to condone taboos. So, the Legislative Council today strongly denounced the

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Israeli Supreme Court's decision to allow the Temple Mount Faithful and other extremists to enter the al-Aqsa Mosque. We warn them that such behavior will lead to confrontation and battles. I do not believe the current peace process will allow or tolerate such conduct.

The Council also decided to dispatch three ministers and three Legislative Council members to the al-Aqsa Mosque courtyard to convey to our brothers there the position of the Council toward this issue and to meet with awqaf officials. The Council also decided to urge all Muslims in Palestine through mass media organs to call the Friday prayers the Jerusalem prayers and requested all mosque imams to talk in their sermons tomorrow about Jerusalem and the violations going on there.

[Hilal] The Legislative Council also decided to hold a special session on Jerusalem and urged the current Islamic conference in Cairo and all Arab and foreign parliaments that are concerned about the peace process to take action. Abu-'Ala' then hailed the steadfastness of the inhabitants of the Qaryut and Awlad 'Ali villages who are confronting the settlers and the occupation forces. [end recording]

Palestinian Affairs: Ministry Denounces Israeli Decision on al-Aqsa

JN2507120096 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0900 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Commenting on the Israeli Supreme Court's decision to allow the Temple Mount Faithful group to enter the al-Aqsa Mosque courtyards to perform Jewish religious rites, a responsible Information Ministry source said:

The Israeli Supreme Court's decision to allow extremist religious groups to enter the al-Aqsa Mosque courtyards is a very grave offense to Islamic shrines and to the feelings of hundreds of millions of Muslims. According to all standards, it is an unprecedented step to Judaize Islamic shrines within the framework of the feverish attempts to Judaize the entire city of Jerusalem, rob it of its identity, heritage, and history, and divest it of its genuine Arab and Islamic character.

From this premise, the decision, with the many dangers it implies, opens the door wide to a recurrence of clashes and massacres similar to those the Israeli religious and racist zealots committed against hundreds of Muslim worshipers at the al-Aqsa Mosque and the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron.

The Israeli Supreme Court's decision is the natural outcome of the frenzied legislative election campaign the right-wing parties, particularly Likud, waged against the peace process and against coexistence and the recognition of the rights and reciprocal interests of the Palestinian and Israeli people. This decision is a blatant first step to divide the al-Aqsa Mosque in the same manner that took place with the Ibrahimi Mosque. It also complements the prime minister's decision to allow settlement expansion throughout Palestinian territory.

While we condemn this aggressive decision, which harms the holy shrines of our people and all other Arab and Islamic people, we call on the Supreme Court to immediately retract its decision because of the many dangers this decision entails. We also call on all sectors of the Palestinian masses to confront this new act of aggression. We appeal to the Arab League, the Organization of Islamic Countries, the UN General Assembly, and all the world countries and people to close ranks in the face of this serious Israeli provocation.

Palestinian Affairs: Sa'ib 'Urayqat on Israeli Decision on al-Aqsa Mosque

JN2607080096 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0500 GMT 26 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Tension mounted to a remarkable degree in the 1967-occupied Arab Jerusalem yesterday following the Israeli Supreme Court's decision allowing Jewish extremists to enter al-Aqsa Mosque. Settlers staged demonstrations in front of Orient House. [passage omitted]

We asked Sa'ib 'Urayqat, Palestinian minister of local government, about these developments. He said:

[Begin 'Urayqat recording] Yes, these are very serious developments. They point to the fact that Israel is trying to take unilateral measures to end the final-status negotiations before they actually begin. We contacted the Israeli Government on this issue and filed official complaints. I believe the Palestinian leadership will hold an expanded meeting to discuss the matter. We will approach the Security Council, the Arab League Council, and Arab foreign ministers, who should meet to follow up on the Arab summit resolutions and on other matters as well. As far as the Israeli side is concerned, we contacted them today and filed a complaint, and we hope to receive an official response from them. [end recording]

Palestinian Affairs: Revolution Veterans Urged To 'Defend' al-Aqsa Mosque

JN2507174896 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1300 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The societies of the Palestinian revolution's veterans in the West Bank called on thousands of their members in all areas to remain on high

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alert to defend the sanctity and holiness of the holy al-Aqsa Mosque. In an urgent appeal, they urged hundreds of their elements in holy Jerusalem to defend with all means the sanctity of al-Aqsa Mosque and prevent the rancorous and racist terrorists from desecrating the mosque.

They urged full coordination with their offices throughout the homeland to discuss a mechanism of action and confrontation to defend the honor and pride of the Arab and Islamic nation. The statement said that the slogan that should be raised is: They will pass only over our dead bodies. We are not captives to the decision of the Israeli courts, which gave this right to the so-called Temple Mount Faithful.

Palestinian Affairs: Israel Reimposes Siege on West Bank 26 Jul

JN2607072596 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0700 GMT 26 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli forces of occupation imposed a military siege on the Palestinian [West] Bank governorates this morning and until further notice after two Israelis were killed and a third seriously wounded when their car came under fire in the Jerusalem area last night.

Palestinian Affairs: Al-Rujub — Jordan 'Never' To Have Role in West Bank

TA2607111496 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0405 GMT 26 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Colonel Jibril al-Rujub, head of the Palestinian security services in the West Bank, has said Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's planned visit to Jordan is a mistake. In an interview with our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem, al-Rujub says the Palestinians will never permit Jordan to have any role whatsoever in West Bank affairs.

[Begin recording] [Ben-Menahem] The Palestinians are disappointed that Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu will visit Jordan and meet with King Husayn before meeting PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat. Many officials in the Palestinian Authority [PA] are afraid to make their views public. A lot of them have business dealings or relatives in Jordan, and they fear an overt confrontation with the Jordanian authorities. Today, however, Colonel Jibril al-Rujub, head of the Palestinian security services, came out publicly against the visit. Binyamin Netanyahu, al-Rujub says in a special interview to Qol Yisra'el, should have met with 'Arafat before meeting any other Arab leaders. The key to peace lies in 'Arafat's hands and not in the pocket of any other Arab leader. Israel and the Palestinians, al-Rujub said, have shared interests and a joint agreement.

[Al-Rujub] I think this is a mistake, and I propose that the Likud forget about any other options except for the Palestinians. The Palestinian option and a solution with the Palestinians is the only way to enable all the parties, including the Israelis, to live in peace and security.

[Ben-Menahem] Colonel al-Rujub is among those engaged in a relentless struggle against Jordan's activities in the territories and the activities of the Jordanian security services in the West Bank. Those who believe Jordan will be granted any kind of role in the territories are wrong, al-Rujub said. This is merely an insane dream.

[Al-Rujub] We will not allow anyone to operate in the West Bank.

[Ben-Menahem] You mean Jordan?

[Al-Rujub] Neither Jordan nor any other party.

[Ben-Menahem] The Palestinians claim that the Jordanian security services have also stepped up their activities in East Jerusalem and that they encouraged 'Abd-al-Salam al-Hirbawi to complain to the Israel Police and submit an appeal to the Israeli Magistrate's Court in order to undermine the PA's standing in Jerusalem. [end recording]

Palestinian Affairs: 'Asfur Says Netanyahu Government Lacks Peace Plan

TA2407181696 (Internet) AL-AYYAM in Arabic 24 Jul 96

[Report by 'Abd-al-Ra'uf Arna'ut]

[FBIS Translated Text] Jerusalem — A Palestinian official has said that the Palestinian Authority prefers ending the peace process to the continuation of Israeli settlement activity in the Palestinian territories. He stressed that the PLO's agreement to postpone this issue to the final solution talks does not mean agreement on the expansion of Israeli settlements.

Hasan 'Asfur, director of the Negotiations Affairs Department, affirmed that there is a political and popular decision not to allow Israel to expand its settlements on Palestinian land. Speaking to Palestinian correspondents, he said: "We will resist these measures with all our power. What happened in Qaryut village (near Nabulus) a few days ago is an example of the confrontation which can be developed in the future." He added: "The option of confrontation is easy, especially with regard to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The possibility of confrontation is on both sides."

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Israeli officials spoke recently about numerous plans of settlement activity in the Palestinian territories that provide for the expansion of existing settlements and the establishment of new settlements in order to increase the number of settlers in the Palestinian territories to half a million.

'Asfur expressed the belief that the Israeli Government is suffering from political indecisiveness in terms of dealing with the peace process. He said: "They are suffering from political indecisiveness. They do not know what they want, but Israel has no option except to implement the agreements. It might delay the agreements for some time but it cannot go backward." He added: "Consequently, Netanyahu must choose either security and peace, or say he does not want peace. I do not believe that he has the courage to say we do not want peace, because Israel's legitimacy is currently based on peace."

'Asfur noted that the hard-line statements uttered by Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu prior to the Israeli elections and his political program stems from the fact that he did not expect to win the elections. 'Asfur said: "Therefore, the current Israeli Government's political program is not clear. It is an ideological program. We cannot say that the current government has a plan to continue the peace process."

Within this context, 'Asfur stressed that Netanyahu has tried to camouflage his political indecisiveness by raising the slogan of peace in return for security, not land for peace. 'Asfur noted that Netanyahu's current slogan is a developed version of Yitzhaq Shamir's slogan — peace for peace. He said: Land for peace, peace for peace, and security in return for peace are three deceitful slogans. Land for peace is a deceptive American slogan to camouflage Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. Peace for peace is a worthless slogan that no one accepts. As for security in return for peace, this is the most deceitful slogan. 'Asfur described Netanyahu's government as the most annoyed Israeli Government from the current security stability in the Palestinian territories. This is because security stability undermines all of Netanyahu's options to retreat to a dead end.

'Asfur stressed that the premise of the current government is to torpedo the political content that has been agreed upon with the previous government and not only change agreements and some aspects of their implementation. He said: "Oslo put an end to the Zionist concept that no people exist on this land except the Jewish people. Oslo's recognition of the Palestinian people's legitimate rights and of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 was a fundamental change."

'Asfur criticized the Israeli Government's utilization once again of the term land of Israel, and the description of the West Bank and Gaza Strip as part of this land. This is a slogan that is no longer relevant. He said: "The issue is not one of terms as much as concepts. Netanyahu's use of the term Judaea and Samaria in Cairo was a political provocation. Moreover, the Israeli media is again using the term land of Israel." He added: "The continuation of this policy means the continuation of war. The term West Bank and Gaza Strip is the term in an agreement signed by Israel. We cannot bargain over this issue at all. We are not ready to open a file on which agreement has been reached."

'Asfur stressed that Orient House is the headquarters of the Palestinian negotiating delegation as it is the headquarters of Faysal al-Husayni, in charge of the multilateral negotiations. He said: "Orient House existed before the Oslo agreement and Madrid. It was set up when the Likud was in power." He added: "It seems they wanted Orient House to become an alternative to the PLO, and after they failed they now want to hamper its work."

Palestinian Affairs: PLO's 'Abbas on Netanyahu Line, Arab Support

MM2307152396 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 20 Jul 96 p 4

[Interview with PLO Executive Committee Member Mahmud 'Abbas, also identified by his nom de guerre Abu-Mazin, by Jalal al-Mashitah in Moscow; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Al-Mashitah] Your visit to Moscow has coincided with the negotiations in Cairo between President Husni Mubarak and Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu. Have you detected any progress in the Cairo negotiations?

['Abbas] We have noticed that Netanyahu's language was somewhat different from the language he used in Washington. The Egyptian brothers have played an important part in putting things right, especially in relation to the negotiations' terms of reference, implementation of the agreements, and the speedy start of the final phase negotiations. We had agreed that these points were the essence of the dialogue. We have, of course, noticed Netanyahu did not refer to the land-for-peace principle and deliberately used old Torah expressions, but he did speak of a meeting that would bring him and Yasir 'Arafat together. That was a positive sign of a start of relations between the [Palestinian] National Authority and Israel.

[Al-Mashitah] But he did make a number of preconditions and reservations.

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['Abbas] Before the elections Netanyahu raised red banners and slogans and uttered many "no's" but he knows that if he wants the peace process to proceed he should backtrack, and that requires time. We need peace and Israel needs it even more and it should know that the price of peace is restoration of the rights of the Palestinians and all the Arabs.

[Al-Mashitah] When you say Netanyahu needs time, do you mean until after the U.S. elections?

['Abbas] The U.S. elections are one of the factors which Netanyahu might use to play for time but the real factor is that he only formed his cabinet less than two weeks ago, and we know the problems he has faced and realize he has not read the files yet and feels as if he is still in opposition. All that takes time and requires a change of political mood. Perhaps I should mention that we needed time to convince (the late Prime Minister Yitzhaq) Rabin over Oslo and to persuade (former Prime Minister Shim'on) Peres to negotiate with the PLO. At the same time we do not ignore the important fact that the Likud position is intransigent and ideological.

[Al-Mashitah] Did the current problems facing the peace process occur to you at the time of the preparation and signing of the Oslo agreements, and do you think that there were loopholes in them which could have been avoided? Did you take a change of government in Israel into consideration?

['Abbas] We did expect a change of Israeli government just as we expected that the former government might change its mind. These were all possibilities when we took the first step which we saw as a victory while at the same time entertaining some fear as to the next steps, namely the redeployment of Israeli forces and the elections, the two steps completed after Rabin was killed which might not have materialized. Peace is fraught with risks and, frankly, that is what killed one prime minister and led to the downfall of another in Israel. But if we had not gone to Madrid, Washington, and Oslo and if Likud had come to power while we were abroad, we would not have been able to return to the homeland.

[Al-Mashitah] But your critics claim you have given more than you have taken.

['Abbas] We could have insisted on the dismantling of the settlements or insisted on Jerusalem and not agreed to a phased solution, but we did accept such a solution and postponed (not dropped) the other issues. We still have not signed a peace treaty with Israel as Egypt and Jordan did and as Syria and Lebanon might. We gained what we gained and lost nothing. If Israel rejects a final solution, we would be on our land and we would have the world's sympathy, beginning with the sponsors and then Europe and then half the Israeli people, not to mention the Arab nation's support. The situation is completely different now. In 1992 the PLO was almost in collapse and we had problems with new parties inside and outside the Arab world. We then seized the historic moment.

[Al-Mashitah] Which could again be lost as a result of Netanyahu's intransigence.

['Abbas] Netanyahu's position so far is one of refusal to complete the solution and a shortsighted vision of history. We want to give [him] a chance and wait and see, and judge matters not by their start but by their results. I am not looking for excuses and justifications for Netanyahu but there is no harm in giving him time.

[Al-Mashitah] And if the situation does not change, do you have the means and mechanism to rectify it?

['Abbas] The only means we have are world pressure and the patience and steadfastness of our people. New facts are established on the ground every day: A school built here, a port there, an airport somewhere else. New families arrive every day. There is something new every day.

[Al-Mashitah] Will the attitude toward the religious and nonreligious organizations opposed to Oslo change in the light of the current Israeli leaders' emphasis that the "radicals" would not allow the establishment of peace?

['Abbas] We have taken a clear stand regarding the extremist groups and we wanted all organizations, loyalist and opposition, to merge with Palestinian society and carry out their work in a democratic manner. That remained our firm position until danger emerged to the Authority and its prestige. So we took a firm position which, frankly, we will not depart from. We cannot accept armed militias nor any action that would destroy the Authority, especially if it is on orders from abroad.

[Al-Mashitah] What then is your position regarding that "foreign" element?

['Abbas] We have evidence of what we are saying, and you can see that the parties in question are trying to export their problems to us. We are glad that some Palestinian Islamic groups are beginning to sense the danger, and their position may become known soon.

[Al-Mashitah] Some major Arab and international parties, including you, had bet on a Labor Party victory. Do you believe you got yourself into an embarrassing situation?

['Abbas] The Labor Party believed in peace more than the Likud. We held some seven to eight meetings with the organization head by Netanyahu in Washington

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without any results. From the Labor Party we got a recognition of the Palestinian people and acceptance of Resolutions 242 and 338 as terms of reference, as well as withdrawal from Gaza and elections, and we put Jerusalem on the agenda of the final phase negotiations.

[Al-Mashitah] Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov has stated that right-wing governments do not come under pressure from internal right-wing supporters and, therefore, it is "easier" to reach an understanding with them. Do you support that view?

['Abbas] Any agreement concluded by a right-wing government would get the support of 90 percent of Israel's population including the supporters of the Labor Party, Meretz, and the "Arabs." Here we go back to the famous saying that "Labor is best at war because Likud will support it in that, and Likud is best at peace because Labor will support it in that." But will Netanyahu work for peace? That is the question to which we expect an answer, hopefully a positive one.

[Al-Mashitah] Will the current slow movement lead to a change in the timetables for the phases of the solution?

['Abbas] Now there is only the Hebron (redeployment) agenda. That is three months late and the responsibility for that falls on the Labor Party. The date for "Oslo-2" is next month and that may be postponed. We await the meeting between President 'Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister David Levi. I have learned that the Israelis want to discuss issues related to the substance and essence of the negotiations.

[Al-Mashitah] Some observers have spoken of some side contacts you are making and of differences between you and 'Arafat.

['Abbas] They should look for another game to play. Understanding between us is at its best, and assuming that there was disagreement between us, Abu-'Ammar's ['Arafat's] view would prevail and there would be no open or secret opposition, because the march is what we care about and we know that it needs 'Arafat more than anyone else.

[Al-Mashitah] Are you satisfied with the Arab solidarity with you?

['Abbas] The Cairo summit achieved important results. There is consensus on the issue of peace and support for the Palestinian and other tracks. We are sure that the old Arab solidarity will be restored. In Muscat, the foreign ministers issued an extremely important statement with a message to Israel that it cannot have its cake and eat it and that it cannot reach distant areas before it has solved the problems of close areas.

[Al-Mashitah] Some people are talking about the possibility of U.S. pressures which might force Egypt, for instance, to withdraw its strong support for you and even to "let you down."

['Abbas] Egypt stood with us when we were in disagreement after the Gulf war, and went to Madrid and Washington without being a party [to the conflict] and used its influence there. We always feel that it is with us. Egypt cares about peace, plays a major part, and has a vested interest in the fulfillment of our people's rights and settlement of their problems.

[Al-Mashitah] Apart from political support, do you consider the financial support to be sufficient?

['Abbas] We receive aid from the Arab state, whether through the donors or directly, but the general situation calls for many times more aid especially after the border closure a month ago. We hope that the donor states will keep their promises and we hope the brothers will double their aid.

[Al-Mashitah] What about your visit to Moscow?

['Abbas] Relations with Russia have continued progressively and coordination between us has not stopped. We are grateful and happy about the relations and we will ask Moscow, as sponsor of the peace process, to insist on the implementation of what is left of the issues of the interim phase and to speed up the resumption of the final phase negotiations. As experts on the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Russians should acquaint the Israelis with the dangers of their stand and explain to them that the interest in peace is international, not just Israeli.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Urayqat Says Nothing Changed on Orient House

TA2507150096 (Internet) IMRA News Service in English 24 July 96

[Interview with Palestinian Authority (PA) Minister of Local Government Sa'ib 'Urayqat, by IMRA Associate Dr. Aaron Lerner, "shortly after" the 'Arafat-Levi meeting at the Erez crossing on 23 July — interview conducted in English]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] IMRA: Israeli reports from the Levi-'Arafat meeting indicate that President 'Arafat agreed to limit PA activity in Jerusalem — including Orient House. Is this an accurate report?

'Urayqat: Well I would not say that this is an accurate report. Many issues were raised by both sides and each side raised their side of the story. We all agreed to our commitment to honoring the agreements.

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IMRA: The Israelis say that President 'Arafat has accepted Israel's position that foreign officials no longer visit Orient House.

'Urayqat: While it is true that the French Foreign Minister is not coming to Orient House during his visit, there is a French delegation which just visited Orient House.

IMRA: Does the decision of the French Foreign Minister not to visit Orient House set a precedent for the future?

'Urayqat: No.

IMRA: So you expect foreign ministers and prime ministers from other countries to visit Orient House in the future?

'Urayqat: Yes. Nothing has changed. But I tell you that this is the start of making peace with another part of Israel.

IMRA: The parties have had different interpretations of the agreements. Has an understanding been reached as to the interpretation of the agreements?

'Urayqat: We have agreed to form a group which will review all complaints. The group will see to it that the agreements will be reciprocally honored. It is premature to jump to any conclusions regarding the outcome of this process.

IMRA: There are also reports that President 'Arafat has agreed to have a group review security arrangements associated with the redeployment in Hebron. How does this jibe with the PA's previous position that the redeployment should be strictly in accordance with the Oslo 2 Agreement?

'Urayqat: There was only one issue raised regarding the redeployment from Hebron and that is dealing with the problem that the Norwegians were supposed to leave on August 12th and we want the international presence to be extended and Danish, Turkish and other observers to join the international observer presence in Hebron. Minister Levi told us that he accepted our request and agreed to making the proper arrangements for this.

Palestinian Affairs: Nazzal Denies Split Within Hamas

MM2507134896 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 25 Jul 96 p 3

[Report by Mufid 'Awwad: "Hamas: No Dialogue With Palestinian Authority; Resistance Not Affected by Netanyahu's Assumption of Power"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman — Muhammad Nazzal, representative of the Islamic Resistance Movement [Hamas] in Jordan, has said that the results of the Israeli elections and Binyamin Netanyahu's election as prime minister have had no effect on the resistance and its continuation in Palestine. In a statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT he said there has been no breakthrough in relations between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority. He denied the existence of any splits or tendencies inside the movement. He played down the effects of the statement made by a Hamas official, namely Mahmud al-Zahhar, on Hamas' structure and jihad. Nazzal added that al-Zahhar's recent statements completely conflict with Hamas' orientations and policies, stressing that al-Zahhar's views are merely personal. He said such statements could arouse confusion within Palestinian public opinion, but we in Hamas say we belong to a broad political movement which requires a margin of freedom of expression and pluralism in terms of expressing views. He pointed out that al-Zahhar's statements are unacceptable and clash with the orientations of the overwhelming majority in Hamas.

Nazzal played down the effects of these statements, especially al-Zahhar's statement on the special nature of the situation in Gaza. It does not mean there is a split in the movement, and he is not speaking for an organization outside the Hamas framework; he is speaking about the special nature of the situation in the Gaza Strip, and we share al-Zahhar's view in this connection. The same applies to the West Bank and any other geographical area. However, this does not negate the fact that there are strategic issues which should be agreed by all sectors of the movement. Thus, the talk about the special nature of the situation there does not mean there is a call for a split or an entity outside Hamas' organizational framework. Nazzal strongly denied the existence of any splits or tendencies inside Hamas, saying that noncentralism in the movement, the allocation of roles among its leaders, its organizational circumstances, communication difficulties...all this makes it difficult for the movement to have one father [abb wahid]. Besides, the nature of the difficult circumstances through which the movement is passing makes it logical and natural to have more than one view. However, one should not think that diversity of views, no matter how conflicting, is liable to affect the movement's unity. He stressed that organizationally Hamas is one movement. He pointed out that there are three geographical sectors in Hamas: Gaza, the West Bank, and the diaspora. None of these sectors can single-handedly make a strategic decision, since strategic decisions must be approved by the three parties.

As for Hamas' relations with the Palestinian Authority [PA], Nazzal said: There has been no breakthrough in relations between the Authority and Hamas, since the detainees are still held in the Authority's jails and no

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one has been released. As for the dialogue with the PA, he said: Dialogues are held inside [the self-rule areas] sometimes. These dialogues are proceeding normally and have not been interrupted since the Cairo meeting. They are what we can term contacts, rather than official dialogues. We do not believe the problem lies in whether there is a dialogue or not. The problem normally lies in the substance of the dialogue itself.

On Hamas' assessment of the Palestinian Authority's performance, Nazzal said that requires a lot of time, as there is a great deal to be said. However, I can say [he said] that the Authority has failed disastrously at all economic levels and also with regard to its dealings with the Palestinian people and its continued violations, even against Legislative Council members, who are treated by (Palestinian President Yasir) 'Arafat like school pupils. It has also failed with regard to the political aims, as nothing significant has been achieved and the Israeli withdrawals have not been carried out. There are no prospects for the issues of Jerusalem, refugees, the right to repatriation, and settlements. All these issues clearly indicate the PA has failed to achieve anything for average Palestinians.

On Hamas' position on the Palestinian legislative elections Nazzal said the elections were rigged. If we overlook the political aspect on the basis of which Hamas boycotted the elections, I can say that a movement like Hamas was not allowed to exceed a certain ceiling in the Legislative Council. Thus, I do not believe any number can influence its decisions. Because the council is marginalized and 'Arafat can leapfrog the Legislative Council at any time.

On Hamas' position on the recent Israeli elections Nazzal said: The resistance issue is not linked to the outcome of the Israeli elections. It is linked to the existence and continuation of the occupation, thus I do not believe our resistance to the occupation will be affected by what has happened.

Concluding, Nazzal said: The resistance in Palestine proceeds from the fact that it is a legitimate resistance, whether in the days of (former Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on) Peres or Netanyahu. As for the view that current political conditions make the resistance a desired thing, this view concerns the calculations of other parties. But the resistance emerged through its own circumstances, and I do not believe there is a link between the continuation of the resistance and the official Arab parties' acceptance or nonacceptance of it. However, political circumstances reinforce the resistance. Nazzal refuted views expressed earlier by some people to the effect that the Israeli election results would bring about a breakthrough in relations between Hamas and the PA. He stressed that there has been no breakthrough between the two sides.

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Algeria

Algeria: Air Algerie Plan Hijacked in Oran

LD2507121596 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A statement from the Interior Ministry has said that a Boeing 767 plane of the Algerian airline Air Algerie carrying 232 passengers on board, on a flight from Oran [western Algeria] to Algeria, was prevented this morning at about 0900 [0800 GMT] from taking off from the runway at Es-Senia airport, Oran, under threat from one person whose nationality is not known. The motives behind this act, the statement added, remain unknown.

The same source also said that security arrangements were made immediately on the scene to follow up the developments of the situation.

We will give you updates in our next news bulletins and as soon as we receive any further information.

Algeria: Hijacker Reportedly Releases Foreigners

LD2507131696 Rome RAI Radio Uno Network in Italian 1300 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] We open with some foreign news, on which we have just received further information:

A hijacker has taken over 200 passengers hostage, and there is believed to be an Italian among them. A moment ago ANSA [Italian news agency] reported that the Italian has been released by the hijacker, who took the passengers on the Air Algeria Boeing-767 hostage. The Italian, Elena Conocchiali Infavale, is an employee of the Italian Embassy in Algeria. [passage omitted]

Well informed sources in the Algerian capital have reported the liberation of this Italian, and the hijacker is said to be releasing all the other foreigners. [passage omitted]

Algeria: Hijacker Surrenders to Authorities; No Casualties

LD2507141296 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 1400 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A happy ending at Oran-Es Senia airport. The individual who was preventing the Boeing 767 plane, on a flight from Oran to Algiers from taking off has surrendered to the authorities. Our colleagues from the regional station in Oran told us that there were no casualties and no damage. The plane was carrying 232 passengers.

The man has surrendered and the passengers and crew are safe and sound.

Algeria: Interior Ministry on Hijacking; Passengers Describe Events

LD2507172696 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] An Interior Ministry statement has announced a happy ending to the affair of the Air Algerie Boeing 767, which was standing on the tarmac of Oran-Es-Senia airport. At exactly 1330 today the security forces managed to release all the passengers on this flight without incurring any losses or causing any harm to anybody. The 232 passengers gave a sigh of relief after being held for about four hours. The security forces arrested the person who had prevented the plane from taking off. The Interior Ministry statement said that the person in question was alone and was not carrying any weapons.

Our correspondent in Oran, Wahiba Ghanem, who went to Es-Senia airport, sent us this dispatch on the chain of events surrounding the Boeing 767 of Air Algerie:

[Begin recording] [Ghanem] The adventure was doomed to failure and the ending was peaceful. At 0730 a Boeing 767 was preparing to take off for the capital [Algiers] from Es-Senia International Airport with 232 passengers on board, including 80 women, two Italian citizens, one Russian, one Spaniard, and six Moroccan citizens. The plane was not hijacked as a result of the rapid intervention of the security forces at about 1400 [as heard].

The first official from the provincial administration is with us to talk about the end of this attempt.

[Unidentified official] This attempted hijack of the Air Algerie plane ended safely after the rapid intervention forces went into action. Their intervention was effective and things went very well and [everything] ended safely for all the passengers on board this plane.

[Correspondent] Now we have this testimony from one of the Italian passengers:

[Italian passenger] I was sitting in the front comfortably and had no idea what was happening. At the last minute, they sounded the alarm and we [?came out]. After all this, I am going home.

[Correspondent] This is now the testimony of some Algerian passengers:

[Passenger] We were going to Casablanca [via Algiers]. When the plane suddenly stopped we became suspicious. We were then held back and were asked for our passports again. They also took away the foreigners. They then started releasing people gradually. We were particularly concerned about the children. We left as an

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entire family, ourselves and our children. We left nobody behind except a three-month old baby. Praise be to God, everything ended safely.

[Passenger] I tell you what happened to me. I would not want you to be in my shoes. That is all I can tell you.

[Passenger] He called the people and asked to speak to volunteers. Five or six went but he said they were too young and asked to speak to older people. Then they closed the curtain. This is what I saw.

[Correspondent] Did you see the person who hijacked the plane?

[Passenger] Yes, I did see him.

[Correspondent] Was he old or young?

[Passenger] Young, not old, about 30 years of age.

[Correspondent] Was he armed?

[Passenger] I cannot tell you, he was too far from me. I only saw him in the aisle. I do not know. But as we were leaving the plane, he was carrying a box in his hands, a new box.

[Correspondent] How long did you stay in the plane?

[Passenger] Over five hours. From about 0850 to about 1330. .

[Correspondent, addressing another passenger] You were inside the plane, how did the operation go?

[Passenger] It was 0800 when the plane was to take off. Then we heard a few words announcing that there was an unknown person on board. We spent about five gloomy hours. We thank the captain of the crew and we congratulate the security forces and all the local authorities.

[Correspondent] How did they take you out of the plane?

[Passenger] It seems that they were negotiating and then a group of 50 or 60 people was released and the discussions continued with the captain inside the plane. Suddenly I saw the captain fall over him and push him into the crowd [of passengers]. He then pushed him toward the steps and passed him to the security forces.

[Correspondent] Did you hear what was being said between them?

[Passenger] No we did not.

[Correspondent] Do you know what his demands were?

[Passenger] We do not know. We asked their [Air Algerie] colleagues but they did not know either. Apparently he wanted to go to America.

[Correspondent] As you heard it all ended safely. Praise be to God. [end recording]

Algeria: Journalist Assassinated in Algiers 23 Jul

LD2507115096 Madrid RNE International in Spanish 0900 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In Algeria, the journalist (Farida Bouciani), 24, secretary of the Algiers weekly LE PAYS, was murdered Tuesday [23 July] in front of her family at her home by a group of presumed fundamentalists, according to a report in today's edition of the Algiers daily EL WATAN. The incident occurred at her home in Kabylia, where one of the assailants shot her several times when Bouciani refused to go with them.

(Aouchoubous Bergusi), another journalist on this weekly, was also murdered by suspected fundamentalists last February.

Egypt

Egypt: Netanyahu Promises Mubarak To Proceed With Peace Process

NC2507170296 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1652 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 25 Jul (MENA)—In a telephone call to President Husni Mubarak today, Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu promised to exert the utmost effort to move forward with the peace process along the designated course. The Israeli prime minister expressed his desire to achieve peace in the Middle East.

Egypt: 'Escalation' of U.S. Sanctions on Libya, Iran Criticized

NC2507124696 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0545 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 25 Jul (MENA)— AL-AHRAM newspaper says that the United States may seek to tighten the noose on Libya and Iran by imposing sanctions on non-American companies that have investments in both countries. In an editorial today, headlined "The U.S. Escalation of the Situation Against Iran and Libya is Unjustified," the paper says that there is no justification for the escalation of the situation at this particular time. It says that it will not be acceptable regionally, and on the Arab and African levels, to impose further sanctions on the Libyan Jamahiriyah, which has been under sanctions for several years that are not based on strong or convincing justifications.

Noting the positive cooperation that Libya demonstrated to France regarding investigations into the crash of a

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French airliner— accusations were leveled at Libyan parties for the crash—AL-AHRAM says that this rapport emphasizes Libya's spirit of cooperation regarding this issue. Were the United States and Britain to act like France, perhaps there would be positive results regarding the Lockerbie incident.

AL-AHRAM says that the huge European economic interests in Iran and Libya, and Europe's desire to broaden the scope of its international role, have succeeded in creating a strong European position vis-a-vis the U.S. unjustified desire to intensify the sanctions against the two countries and give them an international dimension, this should prompt the United States to reconsider the way it deals with the countries with which it differs. The paper points out that the United States should be more capable of understanding differences with other countries and to try to influence the stands of other countries through dealing and understanding and not through exclusion, isolation, and sanctions, because this attitude generates regional tension that will not serve world peace and security.

Sudan

Sudan: 'Large Numbers' of Iran Military Experts Recently Arrived

MM2507112796 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 25 Jul 96 p 6

[Report by Zayn al-'Abidin Ahmad: "Reports of Increasing Numbers of Iranian Military Experts in Sudan"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo — A Sudanese opposition official revealed yesterday that large numbers of Iranian military experts arrived in Sudan this month. Muhammad al-Mu'atasim Hakim, member of the Political Bureau and official in charge of information in the Democratic Unionist Party in Cairo, said in a press statement distributed in Cairo yesterday that an Iranian security delegation visited Khartoum at the end of June and held a number of meetings with some political, security, and military leaders. He added that the Iranian delegation met also with Dr. Hasan al-Turabi, secretary general of the [National] Islamic Front and speaker of the parliament, and Sudanese President 'Umar al-Bashir. He said that it was agreed during the meetings to send additional numbers of Iranian experts in the various military and security spheres to bolster the Sudanese Government's forces on the eastern front on the border with Eritrea and Ethiopia. And also, according to the statement, to provide additional numbers of experts to train extremists from neighboring states.

Hakim said that the aim behind Iran's agreements with Khartoum is to undermine security in the region, threaten the states situated on the Red Sea, and hit Western interests in these states.

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Kuwait

Kuwait: Embassy in Vienna Denies Allegations on Christian Convert

LD2407171196 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1418 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Vienna, 24 Jul — The Kuwaiti Embassy in Vienna has stated that the issue of the Kuwaiti national, Husayn Qambar, was purely a personal status issue and not a religious or political issue.

The embassy also stressed Kuwait's concern for human rights, including freedom of religion, and said that the Kuwaiti judiciary was dealing with Qambar's case within the law and in accordance with Kuwaiti legislation, which guarantees total freedom of faith to every citizen in the country.

In a memorandum handed out to the media, official circles, and unofficial religious and civilian bodies and organizations, the Kuwaiti Embassy said that the state protected the freedom to perform religious rites in accordance with the customary traditions and on the basis of the provisions of Article 35 of the Kuwaiti Constitution.

The embassy was thus responding to the allegations made by some media in the West, including Austria, and built on erroneous facts about the case of a Kuwaiti citizen who had converted to Christianity.

In its memorandum, the embassy said that the claims and allegations made by some media and religious organizations in the West about this issue were totally untrue and not based on any facts.

The memorandum included a detailed explanation backed by documents and facts on the circumstances and background of this issue. The memorandum also urged all those interested in this subject, either as individuals, official or unofficial organizations or bodies, to approach the competent authorities in Kuwait, and anyone personally concerned by the subject, to enquire about the veracity of the allegations made about it.

The memorandum said that a U.S. Congress delegation had recently visited Kuwait especially for that purpose and that its members realized the exaggerations made about this issue.

The memorandum added that the U.S. Congress delegation met the citizen concerned several times and that it had become apparent to the members of this delegation that he was free and unconfined and that he was not under any threat, and also that he was performing his religious rites freely.

The Kuwaiti Embassy stressed that the matter concerned "an issue of personal and civil status and not a religious or political issue, as some are trying, out of ignorance or deliberately, to suggest to public opinion in the West."

The Kuwaiti Embassy called on the media, religious organizations, and bodies and official and unofficial circles to "establish the truth before making hypothetical claims and allegations and escalating the issue in an unjustified and unrealistic manner, particularly as the State of Kuwait is known for its concern for the respect of human rights and personal liberties, including freedom of religion, in accordance with the law and the customary traditions of Kuwaiti society. [no closing quotation marks as received]

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia: Papers View Diplomatic Missions of De Charette, Ross

LD2507130496 Riyadh SPA in English 1238 GMT 25 Jul 96

[From the "Press/Comments" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Riyadh, July 25, SPA — Editorial stories of the Saudi daily newspapers on Thursday were largely devoted to shed light on the intensive contacts on the Middle East peace process including the tour of the French foreign minister and the U.S. envoy Dennis Ross in the region.

Commenting on the tour of the French foreign minister Herve de Charette which included Damascus, Beirut, Amman, Jerusalem and Cairo, the Jeddah-based AL-BILAD highlighted the good ties between France and the states of the region and said the efforts being made by France are now more important than any time because they involve all the concerned countries of the region.

The paper emphasized the importance of the European role for establishment of peace in the region.

For its part, 'UKAZ said the intensive diplomatic movements of De Charette and the U.S. envoy Dennis Ross indicate a determination for going ahead with international efforts to maintain what has been achieved and the desire of the entire world to realize a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

The entire world has begun to confront Israel, particularly after the international community realized the Arab credibility, the paper said and demanded that the international community should keep on pressures on Israel until it bows for the international will and legitimacy.

AL-MADINAH of Jeddah said after a power show following the election of the hardline government of Benyamin Netanyahu, the Israeli leadership began to

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pullback after realizing that such hard- line policy could lead to nothing.

It said the relative Israeli self-restraint in the face of the surrounding pressures, should not be allowed to mislead the Arab who must remain united and stick to the resolutions of the Cairo Arab summit conference.

AL-RIYADH said the current tour of the U.S. peace envoy Dennis Ross, which was described as exploratory one, would bring nothing new because the visit came following what has been said by Netanyahu during his recent visits to Washington and Cairo. It said the implementation of the U.S. resolutions would remain a common divisor for the success or failure of the peace efforts.

The Al-Dammam-based, AL-YAWM, highlighted the visit of Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the second deputy premier, minister of defense, aviation and inspector general to Qassim region during which he patronized the commencement of the fourth batch of students of the royal technical institute which affiliates to the land forces. The paper said the continuous tours of Prince Sultan to various regions despite his numerous engagements, emphasized the depth of the relationship between the leadership and citizens.

Saudi Arabia: Riyadh To Pay for Repatriation of Bosnians From Istanbul

LD2407164896 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1455 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Riyadh, 24 July — The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has committed itself to repatriation of 1,000 Bosnian refugees to their country from Istanbul airport.

His Royal Highness Prince Salman Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, governor of Riyadh Region and chairman of the high committee in charge of collecting donations for the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Somalia, has instructed the committee to coordinate efforts with the Bosnian Ministry of Emigration and Social Affairs [as received] to repatriate those who were displaced from their country during the Serb aggression.

The operation to repatriate those Muslim refugees from Istanbul airport to Sarajevo airport will start tomorrow, Thursday. The high committee said that it costs 250 dollars to repatriate one refugee with his/her personal belongings, in other words the cost of repatriating the 1,000 Bosnian Muslims will be 250,000 dollars. [passage omitted]

Yemen

Yemen: Final Draft of Saudi-Yemeni Security Accord Complete

LD2507210096 Riyadh SPA in English 1942 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sanaa, July 25, SPA — Yemeni Interior Minister Colonel Husayn Muhammad 'Arab stated Thursday that the final draft of a Saudi-Yemeni security agreement has been completed and that he and his Saudi counterpart, Prince Nayif Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, will sign it soon. He told the weekly Arabic-language newspaper AL-SAHWA today that the agreement reflects the positive steps taken by both countries to consolidate their ties since the signing of a memorandum of understanding in February 1995.

He also pointed to settling border issues between the two countries and cooperation between Saudi and Yemeni security authorities to fight terrorism, illegal trade, drug trafficking and organized crime.

Yemen: Yemeni Circles Surprised at 'Warm' Saudi Welcome to Afwerki

MM2307160396 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 23 Jul 96 p 6

[Report by Khalid al-Hamadi: "Yemeni Concern Over Warm Saudi Reception for Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] London, Sanaa, AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI — Yemeni political circles have expressed their surprise at the very warm welcome accorded to Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki when he visited Saudi Arabia this week, even though it had been announced that the visit was for medical reasons and that the visit was not official.

The circles expressed their astonishment at the timing of the unexpected visit, which comes at a time when Saudi-Yemeni relations are experiencing a state of stagnation and bilateral talks on border demarcation are clearly faltering. Yemeni President Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih has pointed to this more than once.

The sources in question stressed to AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI that Afwerki's visit to Saudi Arabia is not the first, since it was preceded by a secret visit early in the year. The sources pointed out that Saudi Arabia's aim behind its reception of Afwerki is to wave a new card in Yemen's face with a view to exerting pressure to impose a solution to the Saudi-Yemeni border issue based on the status quo policy — a method which Saudi Arabia used with regard to the demarcation of

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its borders with its neighbors: Kuwait, Bahrain, or the United Arab Emirates.

Arab diplomatic sources in Sanaa and Addis Ababa had spoken of indirect Saudi support for Eritrea's occupation of the Yemeni island of Hanish al-Kabir last December, as Asmara has received both weapons and money from Saudi Arabia. The sources pointed out that Afwerki's frequent visits to Saudi Arabia confirm that.

The sources say that Saudi Arabia resorted to that after its failure of all the other pressure cards used against Yemen, including the secession card, the economic pressure card, and the diplomatic blockade card. [passage omitted]

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Iraq: Israeli TV Reports Assassination Attempt Against Saddam

TA2607054796 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 25 Jul 96

[Studio talk between anchorman Hayim Yavin and Arab affairs correspondent Ehud Ya'ari — live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Yavin] There has been an assassination attempt, more serious than previous ones, against Saddam Husayn.

[Ya'ari] Yes. Here are the details: A bomb exploded at one of Saddam Husayn's palaces several days ago. Fortunately for him, Saddam left the palace something like five minutes before the explosion. The assassination attempt led to a wave of arrests in the Iraqi Army. Some people say that around 300 people were executed, including members of the Revolutionary Guard which is responsible for Saddam Husayn's security. The bottom line is that this was the most serious assassination attempt so far.

[Yavin] Of which there have already been several since the Gulf War.

[Ya'ari] At least six or seven.

[Yavin] What does this indicate? Is there a serious opposition?

[Ya'ari] The Americans at least believe that Saddam Husayn is weaker as a result of the sanctions.

[Yavin] Ehud Ya'ari, thank you very much.

Iraq: Columnist Urges Joint Effort for Food Security

JN2507192196 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 12 Jul 96 p 3

[Article by Zayd 'Abd-al-Majid Bilal]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ever since the 1968 Ba'th-led revolution, our cherished leader Saddam Husayn never spared himself in the effort to pursue whatever serves to advance the Iraqi individual's wellbeing in every domain of life to make up for the backwaters and privation of past reigns of darkness.

As his excellency has taken personal interest in all domains of human activity and followed things up in the field in pursuit of that sublime goal, he has been particulary attentive to the natural wealth and resources buried under under Iraq's soil. His excellency the president can rightly claim credit for the memorable decision to nationalize oil; the national exploitation of al-Mishraq sulfur; the petrochemicals project in al-Basrah; and the phosphate project in 'Akashat; as well as other gargantuan steps that have cleared the way for Iraq to make the league of the developed, industrialized nations. Credit is also due his excellency for building a robust economy that has stood on its feet and proved itself in a competitive world.

The amount of attention his excellency pays to the agricultural sector also stands out as we consider his concern for the good of the society. The country's irrigational and agricultural map has been drawn so as to dovetail with the overall development plan. The president has been anxious to see the irrigational and agricultural projects expanded. He has persistently sought to explore new avenues and outlets to provide for the people's basic and day-to-day needs. This interest took on special urgency after Iraq found itself targeted for sanctions and an egregious 30-nation aggression. The leader has directed that food security for the populace occupy a high rung along the scale of the reconstruction priorities and during the era of challenge and crossing. The building of irrigational and agricultural schemes in the face of unfavorable odds and daunting circumstances has been gaining momentum thanks in no small measure to sound and scientific guidance of the agricultural sector and the optimum use of locally available resources. Up-to-date plans and programs that have paid dividends both in terms of acreage and increased productivity have also been devised. Incentives have also been given to farmers and government and other agencies overseeing agricultural output.

The leader's high-profile role has also been evident in working out plans to soften the impact of the sanctions. He has supported a pioneering approach to the optimum exploitation of land that had been lying fallow. The leader has directed party and grassroots organizations to join forces with agricultural and irrigational state cadres in joint ventures, thus producing more bountiful crops and yielding higher productivity. With the increased irrigation came increased acreage to promote the goal of self-sufficiency and the longer-term objective of a solid economic and agricultural base that should underpin a national and trans-national food security system and national and trans-national economic complementarity as well. This is since any national prosperity is bound to rub off on the entire Arab nation.

His excellency the leader president's role was also evident in many agricultural achievements which showed that the Iraqis took a determined stand in the face of the sanctions plot, most notable among thes[illegible] was the giant Saddam River planned by the presidet [illegible]umself and executed by the mujahidin of reconstruction, and other projects that followed.

Caught in the grip of a struggle of epic proportions, the agricultural and irrigational drive has been hobbled by

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an acute shortage of agricultural machinery and equipment and tools brought on by the sanctions that have made it virtually impossible to make new purchases or buy replacements. Moreover, agricultural output must be based on plans and has requirements of its own — technical experts, a work force, suitable soil, irrigation water, good seeds, and other necessities. Mechanized equipment is a fundamental element in such a joint effort that seeks to secure the right and scientific climate for production.

It was with these needs in mind that the state moved to rehabilitate pumping stations for purposes of irrigation and drainage and to maintain wells and their pumps, as well as to make designs of small dams and divert certain machines and depreciated equipment for use in the irrigational and agricultural process for large areas of desert land that the state had reclaimed for growing grains in particular. The state embarked on this despite the fact that there already were quite an amount of machinery and production equipment in the agricultural and irrigational field. The state managed to make the equipment available to further this strategic cause and to lend support to farmers. The machinery includes harvesting tools, and in this regard the state has been backed up by peasant societies. This is in addition to equipment owned by the peasants themselves. The right course that was never absent from the leader's thinking has been to create a solid base resting on an integrated agricultural- industrial structure. That would represent the springboard for launching a program to streamline and upgrade performance and modes of work in agriculture and to secure the necessary mechanized equipment in pursuit of the ultimate goal of proper food security, expounded by his excellency on several occasions, the latest being during the 20th session of the Council of Ministers in late May. It is axiomatic that, under the regime of the egregious sanctions, exceptional efforts need to be exerted by the agricultural sector and its cadres — incorporating the state, societies, and party organizations — in the interest of securing what is feasible in the way of equipment and machinery. At the same time, much needs to be done in the area of machine maintenance. Given the right amount of hard work and dedication, it should be possible to build an all- round industrial base in parallel with an enhanced agricultural sector. It takes a diviion of labor along the following lines to achieve that goal:

1. The state-sponsored socialist industrial sector and its installations have a role to play. They are required to secure means to complementarity. Notwithstanding the tremendous efforts exerted by this sector to supply the agricultural sector with some of its needs in the way of machinery and equipment, the desired mechanization of agriculture has yet to be realized. Further studies and research need to be undertaken and these are hardly helped by the sanctions. This is not to say that we must sit still and resign ourselves to the fait accompli. We should work relentlessly and explore every possible avenue to clear these hurdles.

2. The role of the private industrial sector in the country has proved itself with the human resources it has at its disposal and the degree of innovation it has displayed. This sector has managed to cobble together numerous spare parts and machine tools for use in agriculture and irrigation. Although disadvantaged by relatively substandard technology compared to the resources and technologies available to state establishments, some innovators in the private industrial sector have measured up to the challenges and shown a remarkable capacity for originality and ingeniousness.

Thus, the private sector deserves all the support and encouragement it can get. The workers in this sector must be accorded the opportunity to compete so that it may make the right contribution to Iraq's industrial advancement and to the cause of the country's national development. The private sector's share in the jihad is no less important than the state-sponsored effort to manufacture spare parts required by the machinery and equipment used in the irrigational and agricultural process of the country in pursuit of the ultimate joint objective of providing the people with their needs for a decent level of day-to-day living.

3. Grassroots, party, and peasant organizations have a contribution to make despite the fact that, thus far, they have tended to act more as stewards among the ranks of workers in the agricultural sector. A formula needs to be devised with the object of developing culturally qualified and enlightened technical cadres in order for them to play their part in setting up workshops for maintenance and geared to industrialization to supply the agricultural sector's need for the necessary equipment and machinery. Volunteers should be allowed the opportunity to train and engage in technical work. Also workshops and complexes must be set up with the help and participation of the state departments. All the necessary assistance must be provided to help make this step a success.

4. Farmers and peasants and other sectors of society have an important role to play. The machines and equipment used in the irrigational and agricultural process are public property even if in certain cases they are the private property of farmers or other citizens associated with the agricultural sector. However, it is the norm that whatever is owned by the individual is part of the communal property as long as this or that piece

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of equipment is deployed for the general good of the nation. It is therefore in the nature of a national duty to safeguard and take good care of this equipment. In order to properly fulfill that duty, citizens must be made aware of the value of the equipment and the contribution it makes to the provision of the means of livelihood under a regime of sanctions. This area shows the need for farmers and other citizens to cooperate in earnest with state agencies and professional and grassroots and party organizations in the effort to maintain the equipment and keep it from harm's way. The general public must be educated to the important value of this equipment and its contribution to securing decent lives for them.

The above four points underline a fundamental inescapable truth; integration must be promoted as a goal, where each party plays a role in the service of the eventual construction of a solid and integrated industrial, agricultural, and popular base driven by scientific and novel technologies. The following trends should help achieve the above:

First, there should be a field survey of the agricultural resources and associated activity to better understand their diverse needs for machinery and equipment.

Second, a working program needs to be devised within a time frame to be worked out by the concerned parties that we have identified above. The aim would be for these to plot a common strategy to serve as a guideline for all of them.

Third, derpinnings must be built for agricultural production, relying totally on local resources and potential and national expertise that has acquitted itself in the field.

Fourth, the industrial base earmarked to support agricultural production must be broadened both in the private and public sectors, as well as in the cooperative and mixed sectors. The aim would be to induce a state of mobilization to upgrade and help the agricultural process along. Serious and dedicated efforts must be exerted to promote the goal of self-sufficiency so that all the requirements of machines and equipment in the irrigational and agricultural area are met. Such a drive necessarily requires a pooling of efforts and energies and opening a new page in our approach to the components of the industrial process. Eventually, a sturdy base of cooperation and industrial integration would emerge and be deployed in the advancement of the agricultural goals whose importance in the fight against the sanctions cannot be overstated.

Fifth, optimum use should be made of accumulated national expertise, and its performance enhanced.

Sixth, We should avail ourselves of the experience of other nations that have accomplished self-reliance in crops and made considerable headway in achieving food security.

Seventh, Self-sufficiency in agricultural crops and other agricultural goods must be advocated as a strategic objective, not only as a reaction to the sanctions, but it must be extended beyond the end of the sanctions regime so that, God willing, Iraq may in the future become a producer and exporter of agricultural goods and grains.

Eighth, rules must be devised and legislation enacted to support and broaden the base of the country's industrial activity so as to boost this sector's role in the overall development process and further the endeavor of agriculture.

Hence, Iraq is now at a crossroads — a fact that has not eluded our great leader's notice. In a word, we should work on consolidating the base of industrial-agricultural complementarity and move from lip service to action. The Iraqis cannot but pursue innovation and make the most of what little they have at their disposal. They have to persevere and display patience if they are to crush the blockade and to get ahead in the face of their enemies' effort to take us back to the dark ages. It is incumbent upon us to work on whatever it takes to assure our great people a prosperous future and to promote self-sufficiency in every domain.

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Israel: Netanyahu Briefed by U.S. Envoy Ross on Syrian Positions

TA2507183896 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 25 Jul 96

[Political correspondent Dan Scemama video-report]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Syria is interested in continuing the political process without preconditions. That was the impression received in Jerusalem from U.S. envoy Dennis Ross, who arrived in Israel this afternoon after meeting Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad. Our political correspondent Dan Scemama reports on the message from Damascus:

[Begin Scemana recording] [Scemama] Dennis Ross has come to Jerusalem again. This time Ross told the Likud government that al-Asad wanted to continue the political process but would not commit himself to the resumption of the talks. The Syrian president wants to know more about Netanyahu and his government. Ross explained that al-Asad is seeking to continue where the previous government left off; or in other words, an Israeli promise to return the Golan Heights. However, this was not a precondition. No, al-Asad was not presenting any conditions. Ross said al-Asad was prepared to hold negotiations on the basis of the Madrid conference, in other words, on the basis of UN resolutions 242 and 338 which call for secure and recognized borders. It is a known fact that Syria and Israel interpret these resolutions differently and this will be at the crux of the negotiations between the two countries. [passage omitted]

Ross also discussed the Lebanese issue with al-Asad and ways to achieve quiet there. He did not discuss the Lebanon first proposal. Netanyahu said that in the near future, he would discuss the redeployment in Lebanon. Everyone described the talks as good. The discussions will continue tomorrow. [end recording]

[A similar report on Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew at 1700 GMT on 25 July notes that "al-Asad rejected Netanyahu's proposal to start with negotiations on Lebanon." The report adds that "Ross came to the prime minister's bureau in Jerusalem today after being told yesterday in al-Ladhiqiyah by President Hafiz al-Asad that without an Israeli commitment to the principle of land for peace there was no point in renewing the negotiations."]

Israel: Ross Tells Netanyahu Al-Asad Still Wants Peace Talks

TA2607094396 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 26 Jul 96 pp 1, 20

[Report by David Makovsky and news agencies]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] [passage omitted] Syria wants to further peace efforts and learn more about the new Israeli government, Ross told Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu yesterday.

"He said President al-Asad of Syria desires to further the peace process and is interested in learning more about Israel's new government and about Prime Minister Netanyahu," a statement issued by Netanyahu's office said. It said Ross and Netanyahu would meet again today.

"Ross added that al-Asad is still in the process of making decisions and is interested to know on what basis negotiations with Israel could be furthered," it said.

The statement said Netanyahu expressed his government's desire to further talks and quoted him as saying, "We are considering different ways to continue the process."

"Among the ways to further these talks, the issue of Lebanon was also raised, and it was agreed that the continuation of the process will be done in a considered way after deep consultations," the statement said.

"We had a chance to begin a further process of consulting on where we are and how best to move ahead," Ross told reporters as he left the meeting.

Syria wants talks with Israel to focus on the Golan Heights before negotiating on Lebanon, but has not closed the door on the latter possibility, Ross told Netanyahu, an official in Jerusalem said.

Netanyahu has said that Lebanon is the "place to begin," and sources said Israel wants to deal with Syria on Lebanon before discussing the Golan.

Both U.S. and Israel say al-Asad wants a sense of the direction of peace talks before he resumes them.

"He does not want to start at square one," an official said. "Syria is not shutting the door to talks, but we are now looking for a formula before those talks start again," a U.S. official said. [passage omitted]

[A report by Aluf Ben on pages A1 and A12 of Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew on 26 July adds: "Following their talks in Damascus and Jerusalem, Ross and his team gained the impression that the gaps between the positions of al-Asad and Netanyahu

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are smaller than had been assessed by the Americans before the current shuttle mission. At the same time, no mutually acceptable formula for the resumption of the negotiations has yet been reached."]

Last night, Netanyahu held a phone conversation with French President Jacques Chirac. They discussed Lebanon and Syria and agreed to exchange visits, with Chirac coming here in September and Netanyahu going to Paris the following month.

[The same HA'ARETZ report adds that "apparently, Netanyahu is prepared to give France a role in the political process. However, in private talks this week, he asserted that he would not bypass the United States, as it has been the main factor initiating and leading the peace process since the Madrid conference."]

Israel: Security Officials Said To Seek Military Pressure on Syria

TA2407104896 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 24 Jul 96 p B1

[Commentary by Aluf Ben: "Netanyahu's Syrian Dilemma"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Binyamin Netanyahu began formulating a new Israeli policy in Lebanon this week. On Sunday, he convened a senior ministerial consultation to hear the assessment of security sources about the situation in the north. The bodies of MIA's Fink and Alshekh arrived in Israel a few hours later, and the prime minister spoke about signs of a change in Hizballah, which to date had been considered a ruthless and relentless enemy.

In his meetings with Clinton and Mubarak, Netanyahu proposed to launch the dialogue with Syria with a "Lebanon First" arrangement. This week, he will raise the matter with U.S. envoy Ross and French Minister de Charette. Lebanon definitely qualifies as Netanyahu's political testing ground. A withdrawal from the security zone which would end the killing of soldiers will muster Israeli and international support and will not violate the Likud's principles.

The prevailing assessment in the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and the intelligence community is that a unilateral withdrawal from the security zone is impossible. Hasan Nasrallah has vowed that if the IDF withdraws, Hizballah will not attack the Galilee. The move could be exploited, however, by others, such as the Palestinian rejectionist groups or radical cells in Hizballah inspired by Iran. There will be attacks, Israel will retaliate, and the borders will once again be set ablaze with katyushas. Hence, what is needed is an arrangement with the Lebanese Government backed by the Syrians which will ensure quiet after the IDF pulls out. [passage omitted]

Influential security and intelligence officials are proposing a different tack to Netanyahu. In their opinion, U.S. political pressure on Damascus should be combined with Israeli military pressure on the Syrians in Lebanon. Al-Asad is the spoiled brat of the peace process. His friends were pushed into agreements with Israel because of their political and economic distress. Only al- Asad acted from a position of power and pursued terror while holding peace talks. The agreement between Turkey and Israel shook his confidence, but only a serious threat to Syrian domination in Lebanon, the apple of the Damascus regime's eye, will rouse the Syrian lion from his den. There is no question of bombarding Syrian camps from the air or of tank battles deep inside Lebanese territory. Special forces could wage a quiet guerrilla war against the Syrians and serve as a sort of Israeli Hizballah.

Rabin and Peres refused to even hear about any action against the Syrians, fearing that an escalation would lead to a war with Syria. Furthermore, the Syrians have other forms of reprisal which would trouble Israel, such as redeploying antiaircraft missiles in al- Biqa'. Netanyahu has lifted the immunity his predecessors accorded to al-Asad and does not hesitate to openly attack him for supporting terror. Netanyahu approved the bombing of the base of Syrian protege Abu-Musa [Sa'id Musa Muragha] after the terrorist attack in the Jordan Valley. His position has given the advocates of military pressure on Syria hope that their proposals will fall on receptive ears.

The prime minister has begun to study the issue and, in the process, he will have to tackle the question of whether to loosen the reins vis-a-vis the Syrians. The defense establishment is not of one mind on the issue. The defense minister has not voiced his opinion, while the chief of staff is in favor of keeping the situation as it is. Shahaq apparently believes that there is no chance of a political arrangement and is anxious about military adventures in Lebanon.

Netanyahu wants to recall the IDF soldiers from al-Rayhan, Sujud, and al-'Ayshiyah en route to the next elections. The proposals to be presented to him merit serious examination, but he must beware not to sink deeper in the Lebanon quagmire in his attempt to get out of there.

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Israel: Ben-Elisar on Talks With Syria, Settlement 'Expansion'

TA2507172096 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1400 GMT 25 Jul 96

[Report by Tzvi Pantanowitz]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] [Passage omitted] [Pantanowitz] Eliyahu Ben-Elisar is shortly to take up his post as Israel's new ambassador to Washington. I asked him what would happen if talks with Syria do not come about, would he not be concerned that things could slide into belligerency?

[Begin recording] [Ben-Elisar] If belligerence is in the one's mind, then they do not really seek peace. And this is why Israel should be even more cautious. If there is this kind of suspicion, then prudence is the name of the game.

[Pantanowitz] Mr. Ben-Elisar, you shortly will be taking up your post as ambassador in Washington. If the talks do not go well, and in the light of the fact that the government here is now discussing expansion of settlements, are we not really on a collision course with the United States and how will you explain Israel's position to Washington?

[Ben-Elisar] I am absolutely confident we are not on a collision course. Why should we be? The United States and Israel have been having such close and intimate relations, understanding each other in such a comprehensive way, knowing the intentions of each other, that I really do not see why we should be heading toward collision.

[Pantanowitz] But President Clinton has made it clear he does not think....

[Ben-Elisar, interrupting] May I just add this. We are ready to resume negotiations with Syria, but when in Israel a government by Mr. Rabin and later by Mr. Peres offered President al-Asad of Syria concessions which were really very far-reaching — and President al- Asad knew exactly what Prime Minister Rabin and later Prime Minister Peres had in mind — and he did not respond. So, why does anybody think that the United States will blame Israel. They should not blame Israel and they will not blame Israel. And on the settlements, believe me, we are not going to run with our heads into the wall. We know exactly where the sensitivities are and we are sensitive to those sensitivities and without prohibiting Jews from living wherever they wish to live, including of course Judaea and Samaria, we can find ways which will satisfy our national aspirations and will not be opposed or opposite to American interests. [end recording]

[Pantanowitz] Ben-Elisar says also that the Golan is not the only subject for negotiations with Syria. The idea of a settlement with Lebanon first is a distinct option.

Israel: Cabinet Secretary on 'Arafat Letter Regarding PNC Charter

TA2607073496 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 25 Jul 96

[Political correspondent Dan Scemama video report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu will propose to Foreign Minister David Levi that Cabinet Secretary Dani Nave serve as head of the steering committee in charge of monitoring and implementing the negotiations with the Palestinians. Our political correspondent Dan Scemama reports that if Nave's appointment is confirmed, the Prime Minister's Office will have exclusive control over the negotiations on the Hebron issue and the permanent arrangement with the Palestinians. Nave himself clarified today that the government is demanding that 'Arafat expressly specify which clauses in the Palestinian Charter have been annulled.

[Begin recording] [Nave] The previous government was satisfied with 'Arafat's letter and did not demand anything else. The present government is stating very simply that this letter in itself is not enough. What we demand is that the process be completed. The Palestine National Council [PNC] must clearly define the significance of this statement. Which clauses in the Palestinian Charter were canceled and which remain valid? 'Arafat must see this move through to completion.

As for the letter 'Arafat sent to the prime minister yesterday: While the previous government might have settled for such a letter, the present government says that the letter in itself is a positive and important development, but it is not enough. The process must continue.

[Scemama] Is this demand a condition for continuing the talks with 'Arafat?

[Nave] I do not think it is appropriate for us to negotiate with the Palestinian Authority on television. 'Arafat knows and was also told by the foreign minister that they must fully implement the process of revoking the Palestinian Charter. Yesterday's letter to the prime minister is not enough. However, if this is the result of 'Arafat's understanding in the wake of his meeting with the foreign minister that this is merely the first step in the direction he must take, which will be followed by additional steps such as the PNC's clearly specifying which clauses were revoked and which remain valid, then we will be able to make progress.

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[Scemama] Thank you, Mr. Cabinet Secretary. [end recording]

Israel: Cabinet Demands Jerusalem Palestinian Institutions Closed

TA2607094196 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 26 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] At today's cabinet session it was reported that Israel would transfer clear demands to the Palestinian Authority [PA] calling for the closure of Palestinian institutions in Jerusalem. The demands will be presented in the wake of the meeting between Foreign Minister David Levi and PA Chairman Yasir 'Arafat. Our political correspondent notes that at today's cabinet session, Minister Beni Begin expressed his unequivocal reservations about David Levi's meeting with 'Arafat and criticized the contacts between Israel and the PLO.

Israel: Jerusalem Believes PA Prepared To Reopen Accord on Hebron

TA2607110196 Tel Aviv HATZOFE in Hebrew 26 Jul 96 p 1

[Report by Hagay Huberman]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian Authority [PA] is willing to "reopen" the agreement with Israel on Hebron.

Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas], 'Arafat's deputy, stated a few days ago in Moscow that the PA is prepared to "reread" the agreement on Hebron. Officials in Jerusalem took his remarks to mean willingness to reexamine the question of the "redeployment" in Hebron with Israel. His remarks were reported in the Palestinian press.

Our correspondent points out that Israel's top policymakers are not sure how to approach an amendment of the agreement: Should it be discussed in the broader context of all the issues outstanding with the Palestinians — linking it to the safe passage, the airport in Rafah, the release of prisoners, etc. — or should the discussion be confined only to the question of Hebron?

In the first case, Israeli sources say, the Palestinians could be offered compensation in the form of concessions in the aforementioned areas in exchange for their agreement that Hebron be defined Area B rather than Area A and that Israel retain full control over security in the city. A proposal in this spirit was submitted to Netanyahu a few weeks ago for his review.

Another option under consideration is amending the agreement on Hebron without reopening it, seeing that the "Hebron clause" in the Taba accord did not settle all the outstanding issues, some of which were referred to the security committees scheduled to discuss the implementation of the agreement. One example is the operation of joint mobile patrols in a way that will contribute to the sense of security of the Jewish settlers. Another proposal is to solve the problem of the tomb of Othniel, son of Kenaz, by declaring it "a holy place," similar to the Shalom 'Al Yisra'el Synagogue in Jericho. In internal deliberations in Israel, it was noted that these proposals are based on the fact that pending issues in the Taba agreement referring to Hebron can be amended.

What cannot be amended in this context is the agreement to hand Nimra (the military government building in Hebron) and the military outpost at the Hawaz junction over to Palestinian control. It should be pointed out that members of Jibril al-Rujub's Preventive Security Service are already operating in Hebron, a fact which must be taken into consideration in any debate on Hebron.

Our correspondent points out that issues left open in the Taba agreement were discussed in the past by Israel and the Palestinians, such as the manner in which the Palestinian Police will enter the city and the places where it will deploy in it, and so on. One of the agreements reached in those discussions was that Palestinian policemen carrying Kalashnikov rifles will not linger near the "divide line" in the city. Other issues discussed were traffic arrangements in the city, municipal matters, and the activity of unarmed Palestinian inspectors in Israeli areas.

Israel: PA Demands 'Free Access' for 'Arafat's Helicopters

TA2507171696 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian Authority [PA] is demanding that Israel grant the two helicopters recently acquired by Yasir 'Arafat free access to Israel's airspace without requiring an Israel Air Force [IAF] escort.

A senior defense establishment source told our correspondent that until new flight arrangements are worked out, the helicopters will not be permitted to enter Israel's airspace unescorted.

Israel: Netanyahu Says 'Arafat Meeting Not Yet Appropriate

BR2607110496 Milan CORRIERE DELLA SERA in Italian 26 Jul 96 p 9

[Interview with Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu by Lorenzo Cremonesi in Jerusalem; date not

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given — first three paragraphs are CORRIERE DELLA SERA introduction]

[FBIS Translated Text] Jerusalem — He has one chief request to the Arabs and the world as a whole — to be taken seriously. "When I say that I intend to pursue the path of peace negotiations, nobody believes me. I had to go personally to Washington and Cairo to convince Clinton and Mubarak that my promises are true." Relaxed at last, willing to talk openly about the most difficult problems of his new mandate, almost two months after his election victory, Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu shows that he has abandoned the aggressive tone and the slogans of his period as opposition leader.

He has not yet had time to turn the office formerly occupied by Ben Gurion, Golda Meir, Begin, Shamir, Rabin, and Peres into his own. He has no family photographs, just a few books behind an empty desk, but the new prime minister nevertheless sits there with the confidence of someone who feels that he is fully in charge. People in Israel say that he actually knows English better than Hebrew. He immediately got down to the nitty-gritty: He did not conceal "the total absence of trust and dialogue with Syria"; pointed out that he was elected "partly to force 'Arafat to honor his commitments in the struggle against terrorism and to defend Jerusalem"; reaffirmed the "priority of Israel's security"; and stressed at length the need to "intensify economic ties with Europe." "My first visit was to the United States, and my second to the Arabs, but my third must inevitably be to Europe, because here lies the future of the Middle Eastern economy and therefore of peace," he added with conviction, referring to his plans for "great technological growth for Israel."

Who really is Netanyahu? Will this uninhibited 47-year-old, the pragmatic and youngest ever prime minister in the country's history, really be able to pursue the path of opening up to the Arab world taken by the previous Labor administration, or will he prove to be still bound to the nationalist ideology of the old Zionist Right, to the extent of blocking any process of normalization? He had no hesitation in admitting that "there are major, fundamental differences between the new government of the Likud (his own party, which heads the conservative coalition) and that of the Labor Party. But this does not mean that peace is impossible. It is enough that pledges be honored."

[Cremonesi] Prime Minister, many people have recently taken a paralysis of the peace process for granted. Nevertheless your meeting with Egyptian President Husni Mubarak was a success. And three days ago the meeting between Foreign Minister David Levi and Yasir 'Arafat also reached a positive conclusion. Have we reached a turning point?

[Netanyahu] I keep telling all our partners that it is crucial to observe the principle of reciprocity. This is no trick to curb the advance of the negotiations, but the key to enhancing their credibility. Whenever I talk with foreign leaders they are surprised by the fact that I really am willing to do what I say. They seem reassured by the feeling that real progress is credible. Obviously we do not agree with the Palestinians and Syrians about the final form of the peace treaties. We state openly that we cannot accept predefined visions: Otherwise, what would be the point of negotiations? But I consider it necessary for us to sit down round a table right away.

[Cremonesi] People in Gaza insist that you must meet with 'Arafat in person.

[Netanyahu] This meeting will take place at the time I consider most appropriate. But it absolutely cannot be said that the situation is blocked. Three ministers, including the deputy prime minister, visited Gaza during my first month of government. The dialogue continues.

[Cremonesi] Is it true that you intend to increase the number of Jewish settlers in the areas allocated to the Palestinian Autonomy [as published]? According to the Israeli newspapers, a proliferation of settlements is imminent — an outright bomb under the future of peace.

[Netanyahu] (Netanyahu concentrated harder, stretched out his legs, and pondered for a few moments before outlining the difference between the "natural extension of existing settlements" and "building new ones." It seems clear that for the present he intends to pursue the former option.) At the moment there is not yet a policy in this regard. My principle is that Jews can live wherever they want on Israeli territory. Moreover, it must not be forgotten that in the four years of the Labor administration the number of settlers increased by almost 50 percent (from 95,000 to over 140,000), despite the fact that the government always preached the opposite. This, because there is a natural thrust in communities — families have children, and settlements tend to expand. I do not intend to regulate the population growth of the Palestinian communities, and I certainly cannot be expected to do so in the case of Jewish ones.

[Cremonesi] Is it true that you would like to see a gradual peace with Syria, perhaps proceeding from Lebanon?

[Netanyahu] It is perfectly possible to reach an understanding with Beirut and Damascus to guarantee the withdrawal of our troops from southern Lebanon. Assuming that it is possible to guarantee the dismantling

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of Hizballah (the pro-Iranian Shiite militia) and the security of our northern borders, then there would be no reason for us to remain in those areas. If Syria's intention to see our army's withdrawal is genuine, then I see no problem.

[Cremonesi] But Syria makes any agreement conditional on an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights (which have been occupied since 1967). The Labor Party is supposed to have made it known that they were willing to do this. But you are not. Why should al-Asad negotiate with you when things went badly with Peres?

[Netanyahu] Ask him. If it is true that Peres offered him Golan, why did he not accept? What are his real intentions? I do not know. But I do know that our stances on this point are very different from the Labor Party's, and that between the Syrians and us there is no trust and that only hostility prevails. Al-Asad continues to support the terrorists; he uses Hizballah as a force to exert pressure. It is a dangerous situation that threatens to degenerate at any time.

[Cremonesi] You are said to have a very "American" vision of politics, including the image of the "first lady." Do you regard your wife, Sara, as a kind of Israeli Hillary Clinton?

[Netanyahu] (for the first time in the interview Netanyahu gave a broad smile) This is what you journalists have decided. But my wife is well aware of the risks and traps of public life. It is she who will decide. Then there are our two children — a full-time job that she does not intend to relinquish.

[Cremonesi] At the time of Yitzhaq Rabin's assassination you were accused of having legitimized the culture of violence within the Right. Now some people accuse you of having forgotten it too soon.

[Netanyahu] That assassination constitutes one of the greatest tragedies of modern Israel — a terrible trauma. But it is dangerous to exploit it for political ends; that could make any opposition impossible — a threat to democracy. How can half of Israeli society be delegitimized through the fault of an isolated and intolerant criminal?

[Cremonesi] Tomorrow over 200,000 Orthodox Jews are expected to attend a public rally in Jerusalem. Will there be yet another clash between nonconfessionals and the faithful over the closure of the roads during the Sabbath?

[Netanyahu] It is a serious problem, and one that could cause an outright explosion between two totally different cultures. The Orthodox Jews want to govern the state with the "halaka" (religious law). The rest disagree. And our job is to seek a compromise in each individual instance, while averting splits.

Israel: Levi Relays to PA Demand For Closure of 2 Jerusalem Offices

TA2607134796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 26 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Israel is demanding that the Palestinian Authority [PA] close down two institutions operating out of Orient House in East Jerusalem: the office of the director of the Palestinian Youth and Sports Department, and the Department for Mapping and Geography. Foreign Minister David Levi relayed this demand to Yasir 'Arafat this afternoon.

Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that the foreign minister also demanded the closure of the vocational training institute in Jerusalem's Shu'fat neighborhood, an end to the activity of the Palestinian security apparatuses, and the prevention of the establishment of offices by PA Council members who are Jerusalem residents.

U.S. peace team coordinator Dennis Ross is slated to meet with Yasir 'Arafat in Gaza this afternoon.

Israel: Jordanian Ambassador Views Netanyahu's Upcoming Visit

TA2407112196 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1005 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's upcoming visit to Jordan will be of special importance, Jordanian Ambassador 'Umar al-Rifa'i stated today in a meeting with Arab affairs correspondents. He later spoke with our correspondent Arye Gus.

[Begin recording] [Gus] Prime Minister Netanyahu's visit in Jordan will be successful and positive, Amb al-Rifa'i believes. The postponements to date were merely due to technical reasons, he says. This is an important visit because it will be yet another opportunity for the prime minister to meet with King Husayn, Crown Prince Hasan, and Prime Minister al-Kabariti and to exchange views about the continuation of the peace process on all tracks.

[Al-Rifa'i, in English] I think it's a very important visit, because it will be another chance for him to meet with His Majesty King Husayn and Crown Prince Hasan and Prime Minister al-Kabariti in Amman and to exchange viewpoints and thoughts on the continuation of the peace process on the different tracks.

[Gus] The key words are the different tracks. Jordanian Prime Minister al-Kabariti's visit to Israel on the eve of

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the meeting between Netanyahu and Mubarak in Cairo sheds a new light on the possibility that Jordan will express its views and positions to the Israeli leadership sincerely and openly, suggesting that this expression of opinion will positively help the peace process in general. In this respect, al-Rifa'i voices extreme pleasure about the meeting between David Levi, deputy prime minister and foreign minister,and Yasir 'Arafat.

King Husayn will soon visit Damascus. Will he resist the pressure to cool relations between Jordan and Israel? Quite the contrary, says al-Rifa'i.

[Al-Rifa'i, in English] Not at all. I think it should be viewed as a Jordanian attempt to speed the Syrian-Israeli negotiations.

[Gus translates the above and continues] It is always important to have contacts and a dialogue between Arab countries taking part in the peace process. We all want a comprehensive and just peace, and that is why King Husayn's visit to Damascus should be seen as a step and as coordination for the continuation of the peace process, adds the Jordanian ambassador. [end recording]

Israel: Peres Said To Seek Unity Government, Sees Sharon as Partner

TA2607104096 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 26 Jul 96 p A1

[Report by Yosi Werter]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] National Infrastructure Minister Ari'el Sharon met with Labor Chairman Shim'on Peres a few days ago to discuss the possibility of forming a unity government. The meeting took place at night in Peres' home in Ramat Aviv. As far as is known, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu was not in on the meeting.

Senior Labor members said yesterday that Peres is very keen about the establishment of a unity government and he believes Sharon can promote the issue. In talks with associates in recent weeks, Peres assessed that the security situation will seriously deteriorate by the end of the year as a result of terror and that Netanyahu will want to incorporate Labor in his government. This is also why Peres is in no hurry to quit his job as party chairman.

Peres refused to either deny or confirm the report about the meeting.

Sharon's spokesman Sha'ya Segal commented: "Despite their different views on political issues, Peres and his wife and the Sharons have had a long-standing friendship, similar to Sharon's relations with Yitzhaq Rabin, which has lasted over 43 years. As part of this relationship, Minister Sharon and Peres meet now, just as they did in the past. In these meetings, they do not discuss party affairs, but political and security issues."

Nevertheless, Labor officials pointed out yesterday that there is a big difference between the meetings Sharon held with Rabin and Peres when they were prime minister and his meeting with Peres as leader of the opposition. "Peres is striving with all his might for a unity government, and his natural partner is Sharon," a senior Labor member said. [passage omitted]

Israel: Interview With Prime Minister Netanyahu

MS2607083396 London THE TIMES in English 26 Jul 96 p 11

[Report on interview with Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu by Christopher Walker in Jerusalem: date not given]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Binyamin Netanyahu Israel's right-win Prime Minister, threw down a peace challenge to President al-Asad of Syria yesterday by offering to pull his occupying troops out of southern Lebanon in exchange for peace along the northern Israeli border, to be guaranteed by the disarming of Hizbollah (the Party of God).

The far-reaching plan, known as Lebanon First, was first outlined in an interview with The Times and later spelt out privately to Dennis Ross the U.S. peace envoy, who was in Syria this week.

"Both countries have a vested interest in building confidence towards the ultimate resolution of the Syrian-Israeli disputed," Mr Netanyahu told me. "I think Lebanon is a good place to start resolving that dispute."

He emphasised that rather than any specified period of calm in Galilee being necessary to persuade him to pull out the estimated 2,500 Israeli troops, assurance was vital that Hizbollah could no longer attack. "This is a matter not of declarations, but capabilities," he said. "Any settlement must remove the capability of Hizbollah, or at the very least disarm it, as all the other militias in Lebanon have been disarmed."

Sipping iced tea and brimming with assurance despite continued wrangling among religious parties inside his hardline coalition, Israel's youngest Prime Minister also disclosed plans for his first official trip to Europe, in September. The visit takes in France, Germany and probably Britain and Ireland in Ireland's term holding the presidency of the European Union. "Europe will have an important role in creating a different climate in the Middle East towards peace," he said.

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Mr Netanyahu acknowledged with a degree of satisfaction that, although his Government had been in office barely 30 days, he had already confounded many of the sceptics who had "demonised" his position and stilled some of the initial panic-stricken reaction in the Arab world, which was convinced that his narrow defeat of Shim'on Peres, the Labour leader, would return the region to conflict.

"Every time I meet foreign leaders, they are sort of taken by surprise that I mean what I say. And once they understand that, they usually feel a sense of relief that there is actually going to be genuine progress, albeit careful and guarded which is what I was elected to do," the Likud leader said. "It is not a tactic, it is the substance of our position."

The 46-year-old Prime Minister described for the first time the importance of his meeting in Cairo last week with President Mubarak, whose warmth surprised even Egyptian officials.

"It was important because it served to acquaint us with each other, and even more importantly it brought home the message that what we seek is genuine progress based on reciprocity," he said. "And that reciprocity is not a trick to stall progress, but a method to achieve it."

Mr Netanyahu had harsh words for those on the Right, including senior members of his own party, who have criticised his decision this week to sanction the start of ministerial-level talks with the Palestinian leader, Yasir 'Arafat, who met David Levy, the Foreign Minister, in Gaza on Tuesday.

"I find both on the Right and on the Left, there is this inability to take our words at face value," Mr Netanyahu complained. "It is assumed that always, somewhere, there is a trick. We were not elected to stop the peace process, we were elected to improve it: to negotiate better, to insist on security, to build a more solid framework of relationships than just empty declarations of peace that do not materialise themselves in practical life.

"We want a peace without buses exploding, and we mean that. We expect the Palestinian side to fulfil their obligations on security. They did not in the past, but I think there is a better chance they will do it now."

He acknowledged that mutual distrust between Israel and Syria was high and exacerbated by his Government's refusal to abandon sovereignty over the occupied Golan Heights. He offered the Lebanon First initiative as an important step towards restoring the type of confidence needed for resolution of the overall dispute.

It was bizarre, he argued forcefully, that President al-Asad should want him to sit down to negotiate over Golan with the result of the talks already a foregone conclusion. "The whole point of negotiations is about how to resolve competing views, and not to predetermine the outcome.

"It remains to be seen whether Syria genuinely wants us to withdraw from Lebanon [where Syria has 40,000 occupying troops]. If it does, I do not see a particular problem to facilitate it," Mr Netanyahu said, speaking of the Israeli-occupied buffer zone that has been in existence since 1985.

He added, in what diplomatic observers later described as an unexpected ray of hope in what had seemed a bleak future for any impending resumption of stalled Israeli-Syrian negotiations: "It is perfectly possible to arrive at an understanding [about occupied southern Lebanon]. Syria and Lebanon say they want Israel out of Lebanon. Israel wants to get out of Lebanon provided we could guarantee the security of our northern settlements."

Pressed on details of the scheme, which would be popular with an Israeli public anxious about the continuing loss of life among its young soldiers in Lebanon; Mr Netanyahu responded: "If the threat against our northern border were removed, we have absolutely no reason to be in Lebanon. We do not covet an inch of Lebanese territory, we do not have any aspirations regarding Lebanon, we have only one desire-that is, to safeguard our security."

Looking remarkably relaxed despite the early criticism heaped on him and more particularly his third wife Sara, by left-of-centre Israeli media, Mr Netanyahu spoke proudly of the skill with which his wife had so far performed her public functions. He brushed off the furore over "Nannygate", which has already subsided. It was noticeable that his otherwise austere office was dominated by smiling family portraits.

"They talked of a honeymoon period, 100 days of grace. I will settle for just one day, he joked, claiming — a fact confirmed by aides — that he remains thick-skinned as far as press comment goes.

"I glance at the papers myself. No one offers me a digested version," the Prime Minister said. "I would not be in this position if I took to heart everything that is said about me. I would have melted away long ago."

I left reflecting on the conclusion which was reached this week by one of the top columnists in Israel, Yoel Marcus, in Haaretz "Not everyone knows Netanyahu, and no one knows what he is made of — but one thing is certain: he did not do what he did, did not win his

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victory did not achieve his post, to blow his career and lead the State towards hell."

Israel: Facilitating Measures Introduced in West Bank Closure

TA2607142696 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 26 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Facilitating measures have been introduced in the full closure imposed on Judaea and Samaria following yesterday's attack. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that the security forces ago lifted the closure on Jericho a short time ago. The security forces are also permitting traffic between the Bethlehem and Hebron areas, banned earlier today, to move. At the same time, the full closure on Judaea and Samaria remains in effect.

Israel: Israeli Couple Killed, Son Wounded in 'Terrorist' Attack

TA2607054496 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 26 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Two Israelis, husband and wife, were killed early this morning and their son critically wounded in a drive-by shooting attack on the car in which they were traveling. The incident occurred at the village of Tirosh near Bet Shemesh. A fourth person, the couple's daughter-in-law, escaped unhurt. Shots from a Kalashnikov rifle were fired from a white Subaru car that sped off in the direction of Moshav Zekharya. Large numbers of police arrived on the scene and set up roadblocks in a search for the gunman.

Jerusalem Police Commander Arye Amit said that a terrorist gang which had carried out similar attacks in the district was probably responsible. Security sources said it may be the work of a group known as the Halhul gang, belonging to the George Habash Popular Front movement.

Six months ago, members of the group murdered army doctor Captain 'Oz Tiv'on and medical orderly Sergeant Yaniv Shimel.

Israel: 'Full Closure' Imposed on West Bank After Shooting Incident

TA2607072496 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0600 GMT 26 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The security forces have imposed a full closure on Judaea and Samaria following this morning's terrorist attack. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that the closure includes Jericho.

Among other things, the defense establishment has closed off the access roads and passages between the Bethlehem and Hebron areas, because the security forces believe that the terrorist squad that carried out the attack came from the Halhul region.

Following the decision to impose a closure on Judaea and Samaria, Palestinians who left this morning to work in Israel are hereby requested to return to their homes within one hour. The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has stepped up its patrols in Judaea and Samaria and set up additional roadblocks.

Our correspondent notes that at the beginning of the week, the closure on Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip was eased. A complete closure has now been reimposed on Judaea and Samaria.

Israel: Cabinet Briefed on Attack; Hebron Mayor Urges Redeployment

TA2607093896 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 26 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] At its weekly session this morning, the cabinet received a detailed briefing on the terrorist attack near Bet Shemesh. The ministers were informed that a total closure had been imposed on Judaea and Samaria, with an internal closure also in force on Hebron. The prime minister said he had instructed the security forces to find the terrorist squad with new technological means. Netanyahu added that Israel is demanding that the Palestinian Authority [PA] act against all elements involved in terrorism. Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that the prime minister was referring to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP]. According to several assessments, PFLP gunmen are responsible for the terrorist attacks near Bet Shemesh. This organization belongs to the PLO, and according to the Israeli assessments, the PA is not taking any steps against it. [passage omitted covered in referent item]

Hebron Mayor Mustafa al-Natshah condemned the attack and expressed the hope that it would not delay the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] redeployment in Hebron. In an interview to our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem, al-Natshah called on the Israeli Government to honor the agreement and stressed that if the redeployment in Hebron was put off again, the murderers would have achieved their goal of undermining peace between Israel and the Palestinians.

Israel: IDF Lodges Complaint Over Shooting; Qalqilyah Closed Off

TA2507072796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0700 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has lodged a complaint with the Palestinian Police

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over the wounding of an Israeli toddler by shots fired by a Palestinian policeman last night. The Israeli girl from al-Tira was slightly injured in the head. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that the Palestinian Police detained the policeman who fired the shots for questioning. The policeman had been suspicious of the car and asked the driver to stop. The driver did not see the policeman, who then fired a few shots at the car and slightly wounded the girl.

The IDF commander in the Qalqilyah area will meet with a representative of the Palestinian Police today to discuss the incident. The Qalqilyah area has been closed off to Israelis.

Israel: Court Allows Group To Visit Temple Mount for Jewish Holiday

TA2407171796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1400 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The High Court of Justice has allowed the Temple Mount Faithful group to visit the Temple Mount site tomorrow, the Jewish fast day of Tishah-b'Ab. The court ruled that the group must coordinate their visit with the police.

Israel: Jews Allowed To Pray at Temple Mount; Police Arrest 12

TA2507171896 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1400 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] As Jews gathered at the Western Wall today for the Tish'a Be'av fast, Jerusalem Police allowed entry in pairs to the Temple Mount. At the same time, they detained a dozen members of the Hay Veqayam group for trying to reach the Mount by force.

Following a High Court ruling yesterday, the police filmed the crowd and prevented some members of the Temple Mount Faithful group from entering the compound to prevent a confrontation with Muslims. However, arguments did break out between groups of Jews for and against visiting the site. [passage omitted]

Israel: Netanyahu Not To Change Temple Mount Status Quo

TA2607094696 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 26 Jul 96 p 3

[Report by Bill Hutman]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu has no intention of changing the status quo on the Temple Mount at this time, as demanded by several right-wing groups, government sources said yesterday, after 11 Jews were detained for trying to pray at the site.

Officials from the Prime Minister's Office, General Security Service, and police met Wednesday with Internal Security Minister Avigdor Qahalani to review security arrangements at the Temple Mount, and consider the possibility of permitting Jewish worship there.

The sources said the idea was unanimously rejected. MK [Knesset Member] Hanan Porat (National Religious Party), a leader in the fight to end the ban on Jewish worship at the Temple Mount — in effect since 1967 on grounds it would spark unrest among the Moslem population — was informed of this, the sources said.

"There is a government decision from 1967, and it must be enforced," Qahalani told THE JERUSALEM POST. "Personally, I think it would be good if Jews were allowed to pray on the Temple Mount. But if you ask me what my recommendation is now, it is no. Changing the status quo at this stage would only cause unrest there, and we don't need that at this time."

Ring-wing activists working to overturn the ban had counted on Netanyahu to back their cause, but have been informed recently that there will be no change, at least in the near future.

The 11 Jews detained were members of Hay Veqayam, which had declared Tishah-b'Ab the start of a new campaign to fight the ban. [passage omitted]

Hay Veqayam leader Yehuda 'Etzyon said the group had given Netanyahu until yesterday to change the policy, and is now renewing its fight.

"If blood is spilled, only the government can be held responsible," he said. "What are we asking for? Only that Jews can pray on the Temple Mount. Is this really so evil?"

"All these people standing here, and many others, voted for Binyamin Netanyahu because he promised to allow Jews to pray on the Temple Mount," Gershon Salomon, head of the Temple Mount Faithful, told reporters.

Israel: Settlement Council Launches 'Largest' Population Drive

TA2307181396 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 23 Jul 96

[Rina Matzliah video report]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Council of Jewish Settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza is getting ready for the largest population growth drive in its history. It has launched an extensive public relations campaign under the slogan: "For the heart of the nation, for the heart of

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the land." The campaign aims to prepare public opinion for future enlargement of settlements. Our correspondent Rina Matzliah has the details:

[Begin recording] [Matzliah] Capitalizing on the victory in the elections, the Council of Jewish Settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza has changed its objectives. Drawings of Peres and 'Arafat and anti-Labor placards have been taken off the walls. The council offices are now populated by girls who make telephone calls asking for donations for a huge public relations campaign scheduled to be launched at the beginning of September. "For the heart of the nation, for the heart of the land" — this is the logo of this campaign, which aims to round up sympathy, or rather to offset the pockets of resistance to the enormous population growth campaign the council is planning.

The council's working paper states: The government guidelines speak of strengthening the settlements, but the Israeli opposition, the U.S. Government, and the Peace Now monitoring teams will try to sway the Israeli Government against acting on its guidelines.

The council is planning to enlist the help of government ministries for their cause.

[Unidentified council member] If the Education Ministry produces a curriculum focusing on Eretz Yisra'el, Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza, and history; the Labor and Welfare Ministry brings people who are unable to find housing elsewhere to Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza....[sentence as heard]

[Matzliah] And although no one has actually said so, the campaign also aims to indirectly pressure the Netanyahu government to abide by its promises and to invest in settlements. [end recording]

Israel: Government Body Operates 'Secret' Immigration Project

TA2407133696 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 24 Jul 96 pp A1, A12

[Report by Rali Sa'ar]

[FBIS Translated Summary] "Nativ, the Foreign Ministry's Liaison Bureau, has for the last two years operated a secret project for bringing children and youths — without their parents — from the CIS to Israel, where they are kept in boarding-schools supervised by the Labor and Welfare Ministry. Dr. Yitzhaq Qadman, chairman of the National Council for Children's Welfare, claims the children do not come under the appropriate supervision of the authorities and bodies which are responsible for handling the welfare of immigrant children."

The aim of the Gesher project, which was approved by late Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, is to bring orphaned Jewish youths who have been languishing in CIS orphanages to Israel.

Qadman, who has monitored the project for a long time, submitted his findings to Nativ head Ya'aqov Qedmi and Labor and Welfare Ministry officials. He claims that most of the children involved in the project are not orphans and that some do not want to stay in Israel, but are prevented by Nativ from returning to their homes in the CIS. He also claims that since they are defined by law as tourists, the children do not enjoy social and health rights and do not receive the immigration benefits. Qadman notes that to date the project has encmpassed 150 children ages 5 to 18.

Qadman further remarked that some of the children have criminal backgrounds and are not fit to remain in the boarding schools, which cannot deal with delinquent youths. Several of the children have serious mental problems and had to be hospitalized in psychiatric institutions.

"In reaction, the head of Nativ says: 'Qadman acted irresponsibly in exposing and thus endangering this project. Qadman does not possess the tools or the legal status and authority to examine this project, which is closely supervised by the Prime Minister's Office. The Gesher project was presented in detail to and highly praised by the late prime minister. The relevant government institutions decided that the project should remain covert and I am operating on the basis of these decisions — even if they are beyond Qadman's understanding.'

"Labor and Welfare Ministry officials said in reaction: 'We firmly deny the false information disseminated by Qadman. The project involves orphans who are immaculate Jews.'"

Israel: 'Akko Woman in Custody for July 1994 London Bombings

TA2407170596 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The 'Akko Magistrates Court has just released to the media that it decided to extend by 10 days the remand in custody of a young Arab woman from 'Akko who is suspected of involvement in two terror attacks against Israeli and Jewish targets in London in 1994. Dozens of people were injured and killed in the attacks. The young woman denied the charges against her. Our correspondent Qobi Mandel reports:

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[Mandel] The 30-year-old Old 'Akko resident was arrested several days ago when she returned to Israel. The police representative told the court this morning that she is suspected of involvement in two attacks against Israeli and Jewish targets in London in July 1994: The bombing of the Israeli Embassy in London, and a car bomb attack on the same day on Balfour House, where the offices of the Jewish Agency and other Jewish organizations are located. The police representative added that she is being charged of a serious offense against the state's security, and further investigation is needed.

The suspect claimed she does not know anything about the affair and denied the charges. After reviewing the material he was presented, including confidential documents, the judge decided that because the woman is a suspect in grave offenses, she will remain in custody for another 10 days. The judge banned the publication of her name or picture, but rejected the police request that the entire affair not be made public.

Israel: Female 'Terrorist' Released Following President's Pardon

TA2507130896 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] This afternoon, Palestinian murderess In'am Jabir was released from Neve Tirza prison. She was one of the terrorists pardoned by President 'Ezer Weizman after pledging never to engage in terrorism in future.

Our correspondent Aviv Bushinsky reports that approximately eight years ago, Jabir murdered yeshiva student Eli'ezer Schlesinger in Jerusalem's Sacker Park when she was 15 and a half years old. She was sentenced to 12 years imprisonment.

Our correspondent Yafa Glick reports that another terrorist murderess, May al-Ghasin, from Hasharon prison, is refusing to be set free and is waiting for the head of the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] Central Command to pardon four of her friends.

Israel: Budget Dispute Said To Reveal Source of Funding for Dimona

TA2507101496 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 25 Jul 96 p B4

[Article by Aluf Ben: "When the Pocket Hurts, Secrets Come Out"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The argument over the defense budget and the salaries of IDF [Israel Defense Forces] career personnel led to the disclosure of two important details regarding Israel's nuclear capacity which had been kept under utmost secrecy to date: the fact that the expenses of the Nuclear Research Center [NRC] in Dimona are paid out of the defense budget and that IDF soldiers serve in the Dimona installations.

The NRC was founded by the Defense Ministry when it was headed by David Ben-Gurion and Shim'on Peres, at a time when the defense establishment was involved in numerous development and settlement ventures. In 1966, Levi Eshkol decided to reorganize Israel's nuclear capacity, and the Israel Atomic Energy Commission [IAEC] became a unit in the Prime Minister's Office. All official publications since then have painstakingly distinguished between the nuclear reactors and the defense establishment, noting that the IAEC deals only with scientific-civilian issues. Anybody inquiring into the matter was told that this was part of the policy of "nuclear vagueness" which Israel had promised the United States it would follow.

Ben-Gurion argued in the Knesset that the Dimona reactor was built for scientific research purposes and to develop the Negev, and this official version was enforced for years by the military censor, even after Mordekhay Vanunu's disclosures to the SUNDAY TIMES and the publication of Peres' memoirs, in which he wrote that the reactor in the Negev was built for security and deterrence purposes and was the main project he was engaged in during his many years of work in the Defense Ministry.

The NRC's operations budget has never been publicized. Article 35 of the state budget is entitled: "The IAEC." The sum is updated every year according to the index but is not detailed. The draft budget for 1997 approved by the cabinet last week earmarks 110.55 million shekels in the article dealing with the IAEC. This sum looks too small to finance the maintenance of the nuclear reactors in Dimona and Nahal Soreq, but the reactors are not at all mentioned in official budget books.

Last year, the state comptroller included the article on the IAEC in her annual report about the various components of the defense budget, but she did not elaborate on the NRC funds, which remain secret.

The mist surrounding the budget for the reactors dissipated last week. Seeking to respond to the Treasury's allegations about the high salaries of career personnel, the IDF briefed YEDI'OT AHARONOT correspondent Alex Fishman. The Treasury's data are incorrect, the IDF told him. The salaries presented by the Treasury are paid to all components of the defense establishment and not just to career personnel. The newspaper report read: "The NRC in the Negev, for example, pays the salary of its workers — including civilians, soldiers doing compulsory service, and career personnel — out

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of a budget allocated by the Defense Ministry, which amounts to several hundred million shekels a year."

The Treasury hit the IDF in the pocket, and when your pocket hurts, secrets come out. Thus we found out that the Defense Ministry funds the NRC's expenses, which exceed the official data many times over, and stations regular and career soldiers at the NRC. The distinction between the IAEC and the defense establishment apparently exists only in official publications. [passage omitted]

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Jordan: Crown Prince Meets With U.S. Envoy Ross

JN2507121396 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] His Highness Crown Prince Hasan, the regent, received Dennis Ross, U.S. coordinator for the Middle East peace process, at the Royal Hashemite Court today. The two sides discussed ways to reactivate the Arab-Israeli peace process and a number of issues of mutual interest, in addition to bilateral relations.

During the meeting, the crown prince reiterated Jordan's stand toward the peace process and the need to resume it on all tracks based on the principles of international legitimacy, the UN Security Council resolutions, and the land-for-peace principle.

Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti and U.S. Ambassador in Amman Wesley Egan attended the meeting.

Ross met with King Husayn in London on 22 July and gave his majesty a message from U.S. President Bill Clinton on the future of the peace process in the region.

Jordan: Trade Talks Held With Ross-Led U.S. Delegation

JN2507150496 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1100 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jordanian and United States officials have held a session of talks on bilateral cooperation in the sectors of trade, industry, and investment. The meeting, held at the Ministry of Industry and Trade this morning, was co-chaired by Minister of Trade and Industry 'Ali Abu-al-Raghib and U.S. Peace Coordinator Dennis Ross, now visiting the country. It was attended by the ministers of planning and finance as well as the governor of the Central Bank and other senior officials. The U.S. team included members of Mr. Ross's accompanying delegation.

Jordan: Dennis Ross Leaves Amman After 'Constructive', 'Good' Talks

JN2507164296 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] His Highness Crown Prince Hasan, the regent, received Dennis Ross, U.S. coordinator of the Middle East peace process, at the Royal Hashemite Court today. [passage omitted covered in referent item]

Prior to leaving Amman, Dennis Ross said that he held constructive and good talks with Jordanian officials regarding the peace process and the Jordanian-U.S. relations, which he said are based on partnership and cooperation. He added: We want to work together in our utmost capacity to entrench peace in the region. We also want to bolster cooperation ties with Jordan. We had excellent talks with the Jordanian side regarding these topics.

Answering a question on the extent of Israel's commitment to the terms of reference of the peace process; namely, the land-for-peace principle, he said: The peace process was launched from Madrid based on the principles contained in the UN Resolutions 242 and 338. We are concerned about pressing ahead toward the achievement of peace. The parties themselves, and not the United States, should come to an agreement. We cannot impose on the parties. However, we are working with these parties to find ways to make headway. We will continue our consultations with the various parties to achieve this goal.

He was seen off at the airport by Ibrahim Naghawayy, secretary general of the Foreign Ministry, and the U.S. ambassador in Amman.

Jordan: France Writes Off $64.5 Million in Debts

JN2507113996 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 25 Jul 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman—Jordan and France agreed on rescheduling Jordan's debts to France, by writing off 47 percent of these debts and using the other 53 percent to finance French investments and projects in Jordan.

The 47 percent is estimated at 325 million French francs, which is equivalent to $64.5 million. The French debts to be rescheduled total 691 million French francs, which is equivalent to $137 million. France is Jordan's third biggest creditor after Germany and Japan.

Jordan: Germany To Provide 45-Million Mark Loan to Country

JN2507195996 Amman Jordan Television Network in Enlish 1900 GMT 25 Jul 96

[Announcer-read report from the "News at Ten" program]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] The German Government has agreed to provide soft loans to Jordan this year worth 45 million Deutch marks to finance water projects in the kingdom. During talks between Jordanian and German officials, which ended yesterday, the German side promised to allocate additional funds to finance projects with a regional nature next year. It also allocated 13 million marks in the form of technical assistance to finance projects in various sectors in Jordan. [passage omitted]

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Jordan: Weekly on 'Arrest Campaign' Against 10 Palestinian Factions

JN2607082596 Amman SAWT AL-MAR'AH in Arabic 24 Jul 96 p 11

[FBIS Translated Text] The Jordanian security organs recently launched an arrest campaign against cadres of the 10 Palestinian factions that are opposed to the peace process in the Arab region. Informed sources told SAWT AL-MAR'AH that scores of supporters of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front, and the Palestinian Communist Party were arrested. Most arrests, however, took place within the ranks of Fatah-the Uprising and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC].

The security organs accused members of Fatah-the Uprising and the PFLP-GC of launching terrorist campaigns in Jordan to disrupt stability in the country. As a result, the members of the two movements in Jordan took further precautionary measures, although some were forced to go into hiding. Our sources added that more than 40 supporters of the Syrian-backed Palestinian opposition currents were arrested.

An expert on these organizations said that during interrogation of members of these movements, the security organs focused on links between Fatah-the Uprising and the PFLP-GC on the one hand and Syria on the other, the extent of support these organizations receive from the Syrian leadership, the nature of plans to destabilize security in Jordan, and whether the plans were drawn up in cooperation with the Syrian security organs.

The source asserted that the Jordanian Government recently froze several million dinars deposited in Jordanian banks in the name of the leader of Fatah-the Uprising. Despite the slight improvement in Jordanian-Syrian relations as a result of the Egyptian-sponsored meeting held between His Majesty King Husayn and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad in Cairo, ties remain strained because of the terrorism issue.

The king provided the Cairo summit with a file on terrorism in Jordan, as well as Syria's relationship with it. The security organs asserted that the sources of terrorism in Jordan are Fatah-the Uprising and the PFLP-GC and that these two organizations planned to assassinate Prince Hasan and Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti and to destroy Jordanian establishments and Israeli targets in Jordan.

An informed Fatah-the Uprising source denied that the movement received aid from the Syrian authorities, and said that the movement was investing millions of dollars in Syria and other countries, that it does not expect any aid from any Arab or foreign country, and that it can extend aid to some Arab countries.

Our source also denied that the movement planned to assassinate certain persons, and said: The movement prepared plans to strike at Israeli and U.S. interests everywhere, asserting that the movement recently attacked an Israeli patrol near the Jordanian-Syrian border and that it will not stop jihad because the Middle East peace process failed after Israel rejected the exchange of land for peace. In other words, Israel refuses to return the occupied Arab territories and to recognize agreements with the Arab side.

Regarding the relationship of these organizations with the Syrian leadership, the source said: Most investments by Fatah-the Uprising and the PFLP-GC are in Syria and the Syrian leadership extends all facilities to move easily on Syrian and Lebanese territories.

These organizations cannot dissociate themselves from the Syrian leadership because they are directly linked with it and sometimes suffer from Syria pressure. They have also been subjected to many splits and troubles, which have become a major characteristic of Palestinian organizations.

Jordan: Transport Minister on Meeting With Iraqi Counterpart

JN2507173596 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 25 Jul 96

[From the "Economic Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Transport Minister Engineer Nasir al-Lawzi met with Dr. Ahmad Murtada, Iraqi Transport and communications minister, yesterday. The two sides discussed relations between the two sisterly countries. They also reviewed the scope of cooperation in the field of transportation, particularly after signing the oil-for-food and medicine deal with the United Nations.

Transport Minister Dr. Nasir al-Lawzi spoke to our program about this meeting:

[Begin al-Lawzi recording] We discussed with Iraqi Transport Minister Dr. Ahmad Murtada issues related to joint cooperation and Jordanian-Iraqi relations in the field of transportation, especially since this sector is the most important field of cooperation between the two countries. Discussions centered on the impact of implementing the Iraqi-UN oil-for-food deal based on Resolution 986. As a result of implementing this resolution, there will be an increase in the volume of

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trade through al-'Aqabah Port. There will also be an increase in transportation activity between al-'Aqabah and Iraq. This should lead to drawing up future plans to increase the fleet of the joint Iraqi-Jordanian Land Transportation Company.

We also discussed buying more vehicles for this company so that it will be able to cope with the increasing transportation demands. We also tackled the preparedness of al-'Aqabah Port to deal with the increase in transportation as part of this agreement. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Jordan: Israeli Court Ruling on al-Aqsa Mosque Criticized

JN2507114196 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 25 Jul 96 p 23

[Editorial: "The Israeli Decision on Performing Prayers at al-Aqsa Mosque"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli High Court's decision to allow some Jewish extremists to perform their religious rituals at the holy al-Aqsa Mosque today, on the anniversary of what they call the day of the destruction of the Temple [the Jewish fast day of Tishah-b'Ab] is a precedent whose seriousness lies in any consequent frictions that could lead to an escalation. The results of this escalation are unpredictable, whether on the level of relations between Muslim and Jewish inhabitants of the holy city or the level of the official Palestinian-Israeli relationship, which entered a new stage following the 'Arafat-Levi meeting. This meeting will pave the way for a meeting between 'Arafat and Netanyahu and for the resumption of the final-status negotiations between the two sides.

The Israeli decision can be viewed as an unjustified, provocative step, especially since the extremist group that wants to perform its religious rituals at al-Aqsa Mosque today had been prevented from doing so several times by the Israeli authorities, without any problems worth mentioning. Knowing the extreme importance the Muslims attach to the al-Aqsa Mosque, because it is the first qibla and the third holiest mosque, we can understand how this action hurts our religious and pan-Arab feelings.

It is always important to draw attention to the fact that provoking the Muslims' feelings can be the spark that ignites violence and counterviolence. No wise man likes to create such a situation. Overcoming the cycle of violence is the first step toward beginning the required dialogue among the parties to the Middle East conflict and, consequently, toward achieving the aspired peace that is endorsed by all the world powers.

We view the Israeli decision with due concern. We are afraid that its implementation will lead to undesirable results that will reflect negatively on the peace process, considering that it is experiencing a difficult stage both on the Palestinian and Syrian tracks. We hope that the Israeli authorities will pay attention to the seriousness of this decision, contain it, and check its possible repercussions.

Jordan: Opposition Party Says 2 Leaders Arrested, 2 Others Released

NC2507204896 Paris AFP in English 1921 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] AMMAN, July 25 (AFP) — A Jordanian opposition party said Thursday [25 July] that two of its leaders who had actively opposed the government's plan to triple the price of bread have been arrested.

The Jordanian People's Democratic Party said in a statement that two members of its political bureau, Muhammad Khalil and Mithqal Zaynati, had been arrested in the last two days.

Khalil was preparing a sit-in for Friday in the town of Salt north of Amman to protest the increase in bread prices, while Zaynati was leading a protest in the Aghuar region in the Jordan Valley.

The People's Democratic Party, which is legal but is not represented in parliament, denounced the arrests and called on the government to release their leaders.

Meanwhile, the secretary general of the party, Salim Nahas, told AFP that two other members of their central committee arrested by police on Sunday had been released. [passage omitted]

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Lebanon: Arab League Chief, Buwayz Hold Talks, Comment

NC2507180096 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Arab League Secretary General 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid arrived in Lebanon at 1600 today for talks with Lebanese officials. Immediately after his arrival, 'Abd-al-Majid went to Bustrus palace, where he held talks with Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz or about an hour. Ahmad 'Abid, director of 'Abd-al-Majid's office, and senior Foreign Ministry officials were present. NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondent Suha 'Amir has the details.

[Begin recording] ['Amir] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has stated that nothing has changed in Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's policy on the peace process, even though the Israeli's language portrays his policy as lenient. Minister Buwayz said as long as this policy continues to renounce the peace process endorsed by the Madrid conference, which is based on international resolutions and the principle of land for peace, we cannot show optimism about stimulating the peace process in the short term. Minister Buwayz was speaking to journalists after he met with Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid. [passage omitted] Minister Buwayz denied that Lebanon has received any information in connection with Netanyahu's "Lebanon first" proposal.

For his part, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said Israel's military experiment in Lebanon proved to be a failure and that Israel paid a dear price for its attempts to harm Lebanon. 'Abd-al-Majid said Israel's talk about the theory of Lebanon first is unclear and added that we welcome any Israeli withdrawal. He said: We should not make things this easy because this is not a matter of slogans. We must know what is the motive behind raising such slogans. He added: If the aim is to cause a rift between Lebanon and Syria, we say to Israel that these attempts will fail. [end recording]

Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz received 'Abd-al-Majid at Beirut Airport. He said that as long as Israel's political agenda focuses on reneging on the obligations of the peace process, this means we are facing a new peace plan and are backtracking. He added: We see no hope in the peace process moving forward in the foreseeable future.

'Abd-al-Majid emphasized that the Arab League supports Lebanon and Syria. He said the Arabs' stand is unified and that the Cairo summit's resolutions are being followed up. [passage omitted]

Lebanon: Hizballah Claims Attack Against Israeli Patrol

NC2507202896 Paris AFP in English 2019 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BEIRUT, July 25 (AFP) — Iranian-backed Hizballah guerrillas said they attacked an Israeli patrol in south Lebanon on Thursday [25 July] with machine guns and rockets, killing or wounding several soldiers.

An Israeli army official in Tel Aviv confirmed the clash in the central area of Israel's occupied "security zone" in south Lebanon, but said two Hizballah fighters were killed in the exchange. The official did not report any casualties on the Israeli side.

Hizballah said in a statement received in Beirut that the "20-minute clash between fighters of the Islamic Resistance (Hizballah's military wing) and the Israeli patrol occurred on the Rabb al-Thalathin road." "Several soldiers were killed or injured in the fight," it added.

United Nations peacekeepers in the area did not immediately confirm the attack.

Earlier Thursday, a booby-trapped car exploded Thursday the occupied zone, wounding a pro-Israeli militiaman in an attack claimed by the Hizballah.

A spokesman for the UN Interim Forces in Lebanon (UNIFIL) said the seven to eight kilogram bomb (15-17 pounds) exploded at 8:00 a.m. (0500 GMT) under a car on the outskirts of Bat Lif in the western sector of the zone.

The radio of the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army militia confirmed the report and said a militiaman was injured and taken to a hospital in Israel for treatment.

In Beirut, Hizballah claimed responsibility for the bombing and said the target was a SLA "security official" whom it identified as Abu Kasim.

Hizballah said the man was killed and the car destroyed in the attack.

Lebanon: Islamic Resistance Claims Attack on Israeli Patrol

NC2607071396 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0530 GMT 26 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Yesterday afternoon, heroes of the Islamic Resistance waged a pitched battle with Zionist enemy soldiers after breaking through enemy fortifications and security measures in the occupied border strip, and inflicted casualties on enemy forces. This clash occurred at a short distance between the two

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sides deep in the occupied territory. The enemy admitted the clashes but kept silent about losses. Security sources confirmed that hostile helicopters landed at the scene of the clashes.

Our reporter Samir 'Alamah reports:

[Begin recording] Islamic Resistance fighters clashed with a Zionist enemy force yesterday afternoon, after penetrating enemy fortifications and tight security measures deep in the occupied border strip. They emphasized once again that the arm of the Islamic Resistance is long and that the mujahidin will not rest or stop fighting enemy forces until they are removed from our pure land. The mujahidin will continue their resistance despite enemy maneuvers about withdrawal from south Lebanon on humiliating conditions, least of which is disarming the Islamic Resistance and guaranteeing enemy security.

At 1730 yesterday, a group of the Islamic Resistance succeeded in penetrating the security measures and ambushed a Zionist 14-man foot patrol on the Rabb al-Thalathin road. After a fierce fight at a short distance, the mujahidin managed to kill or injure the enemy soldiers. The mujahidin afterwards clashed with enemy reinforcements that arrived at the scene. The mujahidin thus proved that they will continue their resistance and prove their loyalty to the pure martyrs until the land is liberated and the detainees released. [passage omitted] [end recording]

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Syria: Ziyadah, Iranian Ambassador Discuss Religious Cooperation

LD2507223996 Tehran IRNA in English 2043 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Damascus, July 25, IRNA — Iran's [word indistinct] Mohammad-Hassan Akhtari in a meeting here on Thursday with Syrian Minister of Awqaf 'Abd-al-Ra'uf Ziyadah, called for necessary cooperation between the two countries for grand celebration in Syria of the [word indistinct] week marking the birth anniversary of [word indistinct] (sawa).

Ziyadah, in reply, announced his country's readiness to cooperate with the Islamic Republic of Iran in this regard.

The unity week is celebrated rabi al-awwal 12-17 (July 29-August 3 this year), spanning the two dates [words indistinct] to be the birth anniversary of the seal of prophethood (sawablm).

The sunnis based their account on the narrations of the prophet's companions while the shi'ites hold the view that the prophet's immediate household are a [words indistinct] as in all other matters.

Syria: Al-Asad, 'Arafat Discuss Peace, Jerusalem, Other Issues

JN2507203296 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 25 Jul 96

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad received PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat and his accompanying delegation at the Presidential Palace in Latakia at 1830 today. The delegation comprises Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department; Yasir 'Amr, Muhammad Zuhdi al-Nashashibi, and Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi [members of the Palestinian cabinet]; and Mahmud al-Khalidi, director of the PLO Office in Damascus.

The meeting was attended by Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'.

Discussions focused on inter-Arab relations, the situation in the region in light of the Arab summit held in Cairo, latest developments, and the efforts being made to implement the summit resolutions and help the peace process attain its goal of a just and comprehensive peace. The two sides also discussed Jerusalem and the situation in the occupied territories.

The talks continued over a dinner hosted by his excellency the president. [video shows 'Arafat and al-Asad talking while seated, with members of the delegation accompanying 'Arafat as well as Khaddam and Faruq al-Shar']

Syria: Foreign Minister Holds Talks With PLO Chairman 'Arafat

JN2507155296 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Latakia—Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' held talks with PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat in Latakia this afternoon. The talks were attended by Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department; Zuhdi al-Nashashibi, Yasir 'Amr, and Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi [members of the Palestinian cabinet]; and Mahmud al- Khalidi, head of the PLO Office in Damascus.

The talks dealt with the situation on the Palestinian scene and the future of the peace process in light of recent regional developments.

'Arafat and his delegation arrived in Latakia at noon today on a visit to the Syrian Arab Republic. He was welcomed on arrival at Martyr Basil al-Asad Airport by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and Mahmud al-Khalidi, head of the PLO Office in Damascus.

In a statement to the correspondent of the SYRIAN ARAB NEWS AGENCY, SANA, 'Arafat said: It is a pleasure for me to visit Arab Syria, which is the throbbing heart of the Arab struggle march and which is supportive of the Palestinian people under all circumstances. He added: It is my pleasure to meet with my brother President Hafiz al-Asad under these circumstances, in which the Palestinians and the entire Arab nation are facing serious challenges, particularly given the international changes and circumstances we are currently experiencing.

Concluding his statement, 'Arafat said: I am here to hold consultations with His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad and listen to his valuable advice on how we can meet these challenges.

On arrival, 'Arafat and his delegation and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' headed for the mausoleum of martyr Basil al-Asad in the city of al-Qardahah, where they read the Opening Chapter of the Holy Koran to evoke God's mercy on the deceased's chaste soul. 'Arafat wrote the following kind words in the visitors' book: On behalf of the Palestinian people, I beseech Almighty God to bestow His bountiful mercy on the soul of our beloved heroic martyr Basil al-Asad. May God make the expanse of heaven his abode, along with prophets, honest men, and martyrs. Oh our heroic martyr, we take pride in your positions, which will not be forgotten by the Arab nation.

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Syria: 'Arafat Terms al-Asad Meeting 'Constructive'

JN2607055396 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0415 GMT 26 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Following his meeting with President Hafiz al-Asad yesterday, PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat made a statement to a SANA [SYRIAN ARAB NEWS AGENCY] correspondent in which he said: I can say that our meeting with President Hafiz al-Asad was important, fruitful, positive, and constructive. We discussed all issues of concern to our Arab nation, including the developments and challenges facing the Arab nation. We also discussed the developments in the peace process following the change in Israel and the need to coordinate stands so that this process can be truly comprehensive, lasting, and just. We listened to the president's advice and sound, important, and constructive opinion in this regard. We also briefed him in full on the developments we are facing in the West Bank and Gaza Strip — the Palestinian territory — and the attempts to delay the implementation of what was agreed upon and signed.

He added: I thanked the president for the important pan-Arab positions which Syria is taking in support of the Palestinians in these difficult circumstances. We agreed to coordinate our efforts and to move on the Arab, Islamic, and international levels to protect Jerusalem from the dangers facing it.

Syria: Radio Condemns Israeli Court Decision on al-Aqsa Mosque

JN2507144896 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1136 GMT 25 Jul 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dear listeners: During his meeting with Dennis Ross, U.S. special coordinator of the peace process, His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad underlined Syria's principled stand on the quest for just and comprehensive peace, and its continued commitment to the peace process. His excellency added that Syria will continue its efforts to achieve just and comprehensive peace. For his part, Ross reiterated the U.S. Administration's position, and its keenness to activate the peace process on the basis of the principles agreed upon for it, the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, and the principle of trading land for peace. The Arab summit, the EU summit, and the summit held by the Group of Seven have all emphasized their commitment to the peace process, which is grounded in the relevant international resolutions and the land-for-peace principle.

Amid this atmosphere, in which efforts are being made to achieve peace in the Middle East region, news reports from Israel have spoken of moves that are inimical to the peace process. Israel dealt a painful blow to the peace process yesterday when the Israeli Supreme Court allowed Jews to enter the blessed al-Aqsa Mosque in a clear move aimed at Judaizing the holy mosque, just as Israel is doing with the holy Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron. We are noting what is happening in Jerusalem right now to enlighten people about the facts and consequences of Israel's actions. Our duty toward peace requires us to perform certain tasks. We are keen to safeguard Arab as well as Islamic and Christian rights in Arab Jerusalem. Likewise, we are keen to spare Jerusalem calamities that could engulf all parties, especially since the Israeli Supreme Court ruling gave the beast of terrorism a free hand.

Despite these Israeli measures, some parties are demanding that Israel be given additional time so that the Israeli rightist government may steer clear of its expansionist and racist platform, which nurtured aggression in the Israeli community during the Knesset election campaign. Israel made the mistake, and the two Israeli rival parties committed the sin. The election campaign should have been used by the Israeli parties that genuinely seek to achieve peace to enlighten the Israeli community about Arab rights, and about the need to end the Israeli occupation of Arab territories so as to achieve the desired peace. Many international quarters started to be strongly aware of the dangers posed to the peace process by the Israeli rightist government, and also by the wasting of time, which could cause harm to this process. French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette echoed such sentiments when he reiterated his country's stands, which stipulate that the relevant UN Security Council resolutions should be the basis of the peace process. He also reiterated anew that Syria is honestly working to achieve peace. International political figures headed by U.S. President Bill Clinton enunciated similar stands.

Yes, Syria is seeking peace. Syria and the Arabs have adopted peace as a strategic option. This has become an established fact on the international scene. Syria is offering full peace in exchange for complete Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories to the 4 June 1967 borders. Based on this, the party that wants to negotiate with Syria on the achievement of peace must shed all its expansionist and racist impediments, which smack of arrogance. It must demonstrate a sincere desire to maintain stability and security in the region. Moreover, it must harbor goodwill toward all peoples of the region. It must also be willing to articulate an honest commitment to withdrawal from all occupied Syrian

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and Arab territories, and to implementing the relevant international resolutions, for the implementation of these resolutions would help bring about the desired peace, which would ensure the rights, dignity, and security of all sides.

Syria: Al-Ahmar Receives Federation of Communist Parties' Chief

JN2507153396 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, assistant secretary general of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, received (Oleg Chenen), head of the Federation of Communist Parties in the former Soviet Union, and (Vladimir Keyoztchkova), member of the federation and of the Russian Parliament, this morning. The meeting was attended by the secretary of the Foreign Relations Bureau of the Party's National Command.

The participants in the meeting discussed the close ties of friendship between the Syrian Arab people and the Russian people, cooperation between Syria and the Russian Federation, and relations between the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party and the Federation of Communist Parties in the former Soviet Union. The conferees also discussed ways to enhance cooperation and relations to bolster Syrian-Russian friendship in the interest of the two peoples.

The conferees also discussed developments in the Arab region and in the countries of the former Soviet Union, and the Middle East peace process. The attendees exchanged views on various world developments.

'Abdallah al-Ahmar stressed Syria's firm and principled adherence to the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace based on international legitimacy, the implementation of relevant resolutions, and the land-for-peace principle. Comrade al-Ahmar said Syria will not be party to any peace that does not restore Arab rights and land in full; that does not lead to Israel's full withdrawal from the Golan to the 4 June 1967 lines and from southern Lebanon; and that does not enable the Palestinian people to achieve their right to self-determination.

Oleg Chenen expressed appreciation for Syria's firm position and valued its achievements and stability under the leadership of President Hafiz al-Asad. He stressed the Russian people's support for the just struggle of the Syrian Arab people, led by President Hafiz al-Asad, until a just and comprehensive peace is achieved, all rights are restored, and Arab land is liberated.

Syria: Syrian Muslim Brotherhood Votes for New Comptroller General

JN2407172496 Amman AL-SABIL in Arabic 23-29 Jul 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] A transfer of responsibility took place within the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria in a fraternal and amicable atmosphere.

His Eminence Dr. Hasan Huwaydi, former comptroller general, introduced his brother 'Ali Sadr-al-Din al-Bayanuni as new comptroller general of the movement. The new comptroller general won the confidence of his brothers at the Shura [consultative] Council.

Brother 'Ali Sadr-al-Din al-Bayanuni, Abu-Anas, holds a law degree and was born in 1938. He assumed several leading positions and was deputy comptroller general several times.

His father is Shaykh Ahmad 'Izz-al-Din al-Bayanuni, may God have mercy on his soul. He was one of the prominent scholars of Aleppo who was known for his intellect and deep faith.

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Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Deputy PM, Iranian Ambassador Discuss Upgrading Relations

LD2507142996 Tehran IRNA in English 0622 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, 25 Jul (IRNA) — The latest developments in Afghanistan, Tehran-Kabul ties, and ways to strengthen peace in Afghanistan were discussed here Wednesday [24 July] night in a meeting between Iran's Ambassador here Gholam Reza Hadaddi and First Deputy Prime Minister Qotboddin Helal.

Praising Iran's assistance for war-torn Afghanistan, the Afghan official called for expansion of mutual relations. He added that upgrading bilateral relations will guarantee peace in the region and help the regional economy to flourish.

Renewing the decisive support of the government and nation of Iran for efforts to restore peace, end war, and create unity among Afghan groups, Hadaddi voiced Iran's readiness to expand overall relations with Afghanistan, and also to mediate to establish a nation-wide and durable peace in the country.

Iran will not spare any efforts to establish peace in Afghanistan and help reconstruct the country, Hadaddi said.

Afghanistan: Pakistan To Reopen Transit Trade Route

LD2407170896 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Pakistan is to reopen the Afghan transit route. The SHAHADAT newspaper [Hezb-e Eslami, Islamic Party, organ], quoting a responsible source, has reported that the Islamic Republic of Pakistan has decided to reopen the Afghan transit trade route. The source said that the Government of Pakistan will announce the decision in a few days.

The Pakistani authorities want to start talks with the Afghan Government on using the Torkhan-Kabul-Sherkhan Bandar and Torkhan-Kabul-Hayratan highways. Another reliable source has told SHAHADAT that Pakistan's decision came after Pakistani Interior Minister Nasirullah Babar learned during his visit to Baluchistan a few days ago that Afghan traders, taking advantage of the facilities provided to them by Iran, were importing a large quantity of goods, which were then smuggled into Quetta.

The source said that the Government of Pakistan realized that it was losing a lot as a result of the lack of a transit route through Afghanistan, so it decided to review its stance on the closure of the transit route. The source added that another reason for the reopening of the transit route was that Pakistan wanted to improve its relations with the Afghan Government.

Afghanistan: Commission To Investigate Circulation of Forged Currency

LD2507171096 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Islamic State of Afghanistan [ISA] has assigned a special commission to investigate the forged afghani banknotes that have been put into circulation in the foreign exchange markets of Kabul and Jalalabad.

According to a SHAHADAT newspaper report, esteemed 'Aziz Morad, presidential spokesman, has said that the ISA has decided to identify those who are responsible for the printing of forged banknotes and to initiate proceedings against them in the International Court of Justice. He said: Although this issue has not yet gained an extended and dangerous dimension, the ISA regards such an action as a treacherous action against the state and the people of Afghanistan.

Morad added: In the past several months, 10,000-afghani banknotes have been put in circulation in foreign exchange markets. In its recent session, the High State Council decided to take serious action to resolve this issue.

Afghanistan: Central Bank Denies 10,000 Afghani Banknotes Withdrawn

LD2507200396 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Central Bank of Afghanistan has rejected rumors suggesting that 10,000 Afghani banknotes have been withdrawn from circulation. A source of the Central Bank said to a BAKHTAR correspondent [passage indistinct]

India

India: Gowda Urges International Cooperation Against Terrorism

BK2507123096 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The prime minister has called upon democratic societies to cooperate and take united action against the challenge of terrorism and its sponsors. Inaugurating an international convention on democracy and terrorism in New Delhi today, Mr.

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H.D. Deve Gowda said there can be no compromise with criminals and terrorists who pose a threat to the very fabric of democratic societies.

The prime minister said India's belief in tolerance, nonviolence and democracy has not allowed terrorism to succeed in Kashmir or in other parts of the country. He said during his recent visit to Jammu and Kashmir he found a sincere desire for peace among the people and to rejoin the political mainstream of the country. He said this had encouraged the government to go ahead with holding the assembly elections there.

Denouncing terrorism sponsored and supported by states across borders, which he said became another means of waging war, the prime minister appealed for international cooperation to combat the menace. He called upon all SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] countries to enact legislation to ratify the SAARC convention on suppression of terrorism. Mr. Deve Gowda said New Delhi has also called for an early conclusion of an international convention to combat terrorism under the aegis of the United Nations.

In his keynote address, the home minister, Mr. Indrajit Gupta, said modern-day terrorism is holding out a dangerous promise of establishing governments based on purely religious and ethnic concepts.

India: Pakistan TV Reports Kashmiris Reject Economic Package Offer

BK2507151496 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kashmiri people have rejected economic package announced by India Government for the uplift of occupied Kashmir, reports PTV special correspondent, Ghulam Nabi Khayal.

[Begin Khayal's recording] The so-called economic package offered by the Indian prime minister to Jammu and Kashmir state has been outrightly rejected by the people of Kashmir. The package speaks of construction of a railway line up to Kashmir Valley, a new highway, and a power house [plant] with a deadline of 6 to 10 years time. While speaking to a cross-section of people on phone from here, this correspondent was told that the package was nothing but to rub salt to the injuries of Kashmiris. A social activist said that these things do not come under any priority for the people of Kashmir, who have laid down 40,000 lives during the ongoing freedom struggle. He said the government should first of all release thousands of youth who are jailed for years now. An economist in the Kashmir university said that there were about 300,000 educated Kashmiri Muslim boys and girls who are jobless, whereas the Kashmir pandits have been properly employed all over India. Ghulam Nabi Khayal, PTV News, New Delhi. [end recording]

In occupied Kashmir, a large-scale troop movement is underway to combat insurgency and pave the way for holding elections in September. In accordance with the plan, the Indian forces have let loose terror in the areas, which steadfastly support the Kashmiri mujahidin. There are reports of fierce clashes between the mujahidin and Indian troops at various places in which the troops suffered heavy casualties. Three soldiers were killed when mujahidin attacked a military patrol in Sopor. One mujahid was martyred in the action. Another two soldiers fell in a clash with mujahidin at (Harel) in Kupwara.

India: Rao Reminds Ministers of Congress' Support to Government

BK2607014296 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Congress president, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, has said the constituents of the United Front government should realize the need for coordination with his party. Addressing the Congress parliamentary party in New Delhi today, he said some of the ministers should realize that a party with 145 members is supporting their government from outside. The Congress president said every leader in his party and the government should show statesmanship to make the coalition a success and to ensure that communal forces are kept away. Briefing newsmen, the party spokesman said the Congress does not favor any peacemeal legislation on electoral reforms and wants a comprehensive bill.

India: External Affairs Minister Gujral Calls For SAARC Expansion

BK2507131596 Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 25 Jul 96 p 10

[Article by S.D. Muni]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In his first policy statement, External Affairs Minister I K Gujral called for the expansion of SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Corporation] by inviting Myanmar [Burma] in the east and Afghanistan and the central Asian countries in the west to join the South Asian grouping. This is not the first time that the idea of an expanded region for cooperation in South Asia has been put forward. As early as 1977, South Asian academics had proposed that countries like Iran, Afghanistan and Myanmar should join hands with South Asia. It is not clear, however, if Mr Gujral's reference to Central Asia includes Iran.

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Even after the formal establishment of SAARC in 1985, Afghanistan and Myanmar were sounded to become members of this Organisation, but without any success. Being afraid of pro-democracy pressure, Myanmar's junta had preferred isolation. As for the membership of Afghanistan in SAARC, India saw in this a support for the then Najibullah government and a counterbalance to Pakistan's anti-India stance in regional affairs. Obviously, Pakistan did not agree to this, saying that criteria for allowing new members had not been worked out. Since SAARC works on the principle of unanimity, Pakistan's reservations succeeded in blocking Afghanistan's entry.

Mr Gujral's attempt to revive the idea of expanding SAARC is welcome in the context of India's liberalising economy and its new approach to post-Cold War developments in Asia. Strategically, it will free SAARC from its narrow subcontinental focus where South Asia's bilateral tensions between India and Pakistan, are constraining regional cooperation. The larger size of the regional community resulting from the inclusion of Central Asian countries may help Pakistan soften its self-imposed ideological fixation against a South Asian regional identity. It is true that as a consequence of Central Asia's membership, a number of other volatile issues will be brought to South Asia's attention. This is because Central Asia is exposed to conflicting and powerful forces on account of its fragile state structure, rich oil and mineral reserves, burgeoning Islamic identity and strategic proximity to China and Russia.

Similarly, Myanmar is also being sucked into the strategic and economic dynamics of the Asia-Pacific region and its presence would influence the SAARC agenda accordingly. All this, however, should not worry India or other SAARC members as they are also looking towards wider Asian groupings like ASEAN, the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO) and Indian Ocean rim cooperation.

The real problem in Mr Gujral's idea is its feasibility. Pakistan is deeply involved in the Afghan civil war and is backing the Taleban forces against the Rabbani regime in Kabul. Islamabad, thus, cannot support Afghanistan's entry into SAARC. Besides, Pakistan and other forces actively competing in Central Asia would also not like India to emerge as an important player in that turbulent region under the umbrella of SAARC. Myanmar being happy with the prospects of its early membership of ASEAN, may not be excited about getting a berth in SAARC. One therefore, hopes that our foreign office will soon come up with a package to make the idea of an expanded SAARC viable and more attractive.

India: India 'Better Off In Than Out' of GATT
Commentary

BK2507130796 Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 25 Jul 96 p 10

[Article by Pradeep S. Mehta]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Ms Suman Sahai's article, "India Should Avoid TRIP Traps" (July 18) obfuscates the central issues involved in the debate on trade related intellectual property rights (TRIPs). I agree that it is an unequal world and that GATT 1994 is an unequal and asymmetrical treaty. Yet, India is better off in than out. Just look at China, which is trying so hard to join the WTO!

The US omnibus trade law, Super 301, is there precisely because of the United States' hegemonic power — not only as the world's biggest trader or market — but as the world's only real superpower. The US has used this fact against its own allies like Japan and the EU on several occasions. The latest evidence is the new Helms-Burton law, which proposes banning executives from companies doing business with Cuba from travelling to the US.

Strong Legislation

Coming to TRIPs, the US has already forced its NAFTA ally, Mexico, to rein in the transition period for compliance from five to three years. Armed with this and other successes, it is putting pressure on all advanced developing countries such as China, India, Brazil etc. to rein in their transition period as well. TRIPs does provide for enactment of a plant varieties Act or a sui generis legislation. It will extend the patent regime to living beings, which are prima facie exempt under patent laws but covered under the UPOV 78 and UPOV 91 conventions. So, India does need a strong seed legislation.

India has ten years to change its patent regime to cover technologies which are not presently covered — like food, pharmaceuticals and chemicals. Under the existing Indian Patent Act, these are excluded from being patented. Under another provision — on exclusive marketing rights or pipeline protection — we have to entertain patent applications on pharmaceuticals and agrochemicals as of January 1, 1995, put them into a 'black box' and grant exclusive marketing rights for five years. This is virtually recognising patenting without granting them the patent right for 20 years as required under TRIPs.

The lack of the insertion of this pipeline protection in our Patent Act as of January 1, 1995 is what the US has threatened to take India to the WTO for. The

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amendment Bill is under the scrutiny of a Rajya Sabha select committee. It is yet to be seen whether this will be accepted as a genuine ground for failure in our GATT commitments, but is certainly worth a try.

Just as blinkered environmentalists and human rights activists in the North are pushing for an environmental and social clause in GATT, our own tunnel-vision activists are howling for rejecting TRIPs and GATT as a whole. Granted that TRIPs has no business to be there. It has nothing to do with trade. It is against trade liberalisation i.e. the whole spirit of GATT 1994. It will only promote rent-seeking. It is there because big business wanted it to be there. And that the future is more portentous when the Multilateral Agreement on Investment will be hammered down our throats. In the face of all this, however, it is not enough to keep talking about Southern unity. Even during the negotiations on TRIPs, Southern unity fell apart under pressure from the US. We did not even engage in the negotiations entirely, otherwise we could have got a better text.

There might be Southern unity at places like the Leipzig conference on Genetic Resources and Farmers Rights or UNCTAD [United Nations Conference on Trade and Development], but such meetings are not negotiation green rooms. When it comes to the crux Southern unity vanishes. The UN Code of Conduct for TNCs [Transnational Corporations], for example, was aborted by US pressure, which Southern countries including India — succumbed to. Yes, India is highly respected and looked upon to provide intellectual leadership by the South, but on several occasions its face has been kicked in. Therefore, India should have strategies to look at its own interests when the unity factor disappears. Besides, several of us believe that India has been in the reactive mode for a long time, and that this should change to a proactive mode.

Several Reasons

Indeed, it is time India went the whole hog and brought in all the necessary amendments to our Patent Act now itself instead of waiting for the expiry of the transition period. There are several reasons for this: If we have to do it by 2000, why not do it now so we can take advantage of all the flexibilities in TRIPs? This will ensure full analyses and debate within the country now rather than closer towards the end of the period, when we might end up with a garbled text, as in the controversial 1995 amendment Bill.

Besides, since both the US and Europe are pushing to decrease the transition period, by doing so voluntarily we could — as a bargaining lever — ask for reducing the transition period in the agreements on textiles and agriculture. Both of these will benefit India more than we would lose in tightening up our commitments under TRIPs.

Iran

Iran: Turkish Army Envoys To Investigate Iran Attacks

LD2507143696 Tehran IRNA in English 0750 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, July 25, IRNA — Representatives of the Turkish army are to visit Iran to investigate the recent attacks of the Turkish helicopters on the Iranian territory, reported the Persian daily 'IRAN' Thursday [25 July].

Quoting Deputy Foreign Minister for Asia-Pacific affairs Ala'eddin Borujerdi, the paper said the report of their findings will serve as a basis for future decision-making on closing this undesirable case.

Two Turkish helicopters violated the Iranian airspace in Silvana region, northwestern Iran, on June 26 and fired two rockets killing six citizens and injuring 15 others.

Borujerdi said that such incidents in sensitive regions are likely but expressed hope that the government of Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan will be able to overcome problems and work towards creation of calm conditions at the country's joint borders with Iran.

The deputy foreign minister stressed that Iran is for friendly and sound relations with Turkey but at the same time will not tolerate any aggression on its territory.

He added that Iran and Turkey as two major Islamic and neighboring countries should enjoy growing relations and counter any move which may upset this trend.

Borujerdi also said that Turkish ministers of energy and interior may visit Tehran next month adding that the trips will serve as a preface to the visit to Iran of the Turkish prime minister.

Iran: Paper Views Netanyahu's 'Hasty Trip' to Cairo

LD2507212896 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 22 Jul 96 pp 1, 16

[Editorial: "Netanyahu's First Political Mistake: A Hasty Visit to Cairo]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

The Middle East anticipates many new developments. However, the situation has become so complex that no one can be confident enough to offer any clear

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forecasts about the future course of events, such as for instance when the deadlocked Arab-Israeli compromise talks may resume again.

Although in recent weeks the Cairo regime has made intensive efforts to guarantee for itself the role of the "catalyst of peace" and assume the posture of the spokesman of the Arabs, the political equations of the region are too complex to allow Mubarak to prove his claims easily and make everyone else accept and acknowledge them.

Even the visit of Netanyahu to Cairo could not fulfill Mubarak's aspirations. During the visit, the Israeli prime minister tried to speak from the position of a superior negotiator who has all the initiatives. Mubarak, on the other hand, did not have much to say except to beg the Zionists for concessions for himself — and not for the Arabs as a whole — so as to guarantee the role of the "peace catalyst" for the Cairo regime.

Despite all these, if Netanyahu sits down to evaluate the results of his trip to Cairo, he cannot consider himself as the winner in all these developments. This is because for the first time in the past few years, the flames of the wrath of the people of Egypt as well as the various ideological camps in that country rose to such heights as to set the Israeli flag ablaze. The Cairo regime was not able to extinguish or even conceal the flame.

The clear meaning here is that the situation in the region, even in Egypt, is like a powder keg and any mistake by the Zionists and the reactionary camp of the Arab world could drag future developments into an irreversible trend.

In the post-Camp David Egypt, the Cairo regime has been slaughtering Muslim revolutionaries on a daily basis, and frequent street clashes have invariably led to heavy loss of life. Although Mubarak and his assistants are trying to act more heavy-handedly, the Muslim revolutionaries are not prepared to take things lying down. Instead, they have made the earth tremble beneath the feet of the servants of Israel.

The wave of torture, executions, and operations against people has become so extensive that serious objections and warnings against suppression by the Cairo regime's police are audible even in the highest echelons of decision-making on security matters.

Even though the new round of purges in the Egyptian army and security forces has been carried out with the aim of gaining the confidence of the Zionists, the cries of protest are too strong to allow both the Zionists and the leaders of the Cairo regime to sleep soundly and comfortably. They are in constant fear, lest the flames of the wrath of the people and the armed forces personnel alike rise even higher and initiate an unending chain of anti-Zionist developments throughout the vast land of Egypt.

It is precisely for this reason that Mubarak, realizing the huge extent of the cohesive opposition of the Egyptian people and various political and ideological camps, is now regretting his decision to invite and welcome Netanyahu to Cairo. But his realization seems to have come too late. At present, all the evidence indicates that the Cairo regime was the main loser in the whole affair of inviting and welcoming Netanyahu. But luck was not exactly with the Tel Aviv regime either and the Israeli prime minister did not return from Cairo happy and satisfied. This was because he witnessed at close quarters the scope of the fury and uproar of the zealous people and the adroit political and ideological groups of Egypt. He was sorry to see that he had made so many mistakes in his calculations and had in fact committed the first political error of his term in the office by making a hasty visit to Cairo.

Perhaps if this hasty trip had not taken place, the Tel Aviv regime could have still carried on believing in the erroneous notion that at least in Egypt, the people are in favor of the Camp David accord and the process of compromise with the usurper Zionist regime. But his move made everyone realize that even in Egypt the supporters of compromise with Israel are isolated and enjoy no popular support. Today, with the constantly changing circumstances, some amazing developments have taken place within the camp of compromise. In other words, those who once took longer strides toward Israel are now lagging behind everyone else. They bitterly feel that they have burned their bridges behind them and are now too ashamed to go back to their nations.

If this hasty visit, which was aimed at picking the unripe fruit of Mubarak's talks with Arab leaders, had not taken place, perhaps Mubarak would not have been disgraced so much and he would have been able to act in future as a trustworthy agent for the Zionists and do something useful for them. But, with Netanyahu's unwise move, even Mubarak has turned into a "spent and burned out" force for Israel. After all, he may be unable to do anything for them even in future, since his true face has now been unmasked for everyone to see.

Perhaps it is for this reason that one can hear whispers going around in Zionist circles about Netanyahu's dismissal. This is probably because they now see with a degree of concern that the new prime minister of Israel, so very soon after his arrival and before winning any concessions, has caused the flames of the fury of the Egyptian people against the occupiers, thereby

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revealing the reality that the Camp David regime of Cairo lacks the necessary popular backing to be seen as the spokesman of its own nation, let alone the the spokesman and representative of the entire Arab world.

Iran: ABRAR Interviews Foreign Minister Velayati

LD2107142596 Tehran ABRAR in Persian 17 Jul 96 pp 1, 2, 12

["ABRAR Interviews the Foreign Minister"—ABRAR headline; first three paragraphs are ABRAR introduction]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Foreign news service — Considering the complicated situation of the region, which certain people may not be able to comprehend, if we see that the trend is going toward a situation where most of the countries of the region are in a position of opposing the compromise [Middle East peace] process, then we should strengthen this trend.

Our country's foreign minister, Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati, in an exclusive interview with ABRAR, announced the above and went on to talk about the views of the Islamic Republic of Iran concerning the various issues facing the Middle East; the future of the critical dialogue with the European Union; as well as relations with Turkey, the Azerbaijan Republic, and Iraq.

In response to ABRAR's first question on the Organization of the Islamic Conference [OIC] telecommunications conference in Tehran, he said:

[Velayati] Our relations with the OIC are good and growing. Over the past few years, various OIC meetings have been held in Iran, one of them being this conference of the telecommunications ministers of the OIC member states. We all know that at the sixth OIC heads of state summit in Senegal, in which His Excellency Mr. Rafsanjani took part, we proposed that we should host the heads of state summit. This proposal was approved there and it was decided that the seventh summit should be held in Morocco and the eighth in Tehran, which, God willing, will be held in November 1997. This is indicative of the Islamic Republic of Iran's resolve to expand cooperation with the OIC.

Of course, it is possible that this organization may not continue to have desirable or ideal stances — just like the UN and the Nonaligned Movement [NAM]. When an organization has 52 members, our expectations — that all its positions should be in line with everything that we say — may be desirable and ideal, but not practical. This is because there are other countries which have their own demands and wishes. [passage omitted]

The Participation of the Palestinian Self-Rule Authority Representative

[ABRAR] Certain sources have raised questions and doubts about the participation at the OIC telecommunications conference of a representative of Yasir 'Arafat's government. Our understanding from your excellency's answer to our first question is that any public conference should be open to everyone. Now, what is your answer to the questions and doubts raised by that small group of critics?

[Velayati] If we host international conferences or conventions, we should welcome all their participating members. Israel, which is a member of a number of international organizations, is among the states we consider as illegitimate. If we do not want a representative of Israel to come to our country — and this we certainly do not want — then we should refrain from inviting an organization in which Israel is a member to convene a meeting in Iran. In other words, if we realize that holding an international meeting in Iran means that a delegation from the Jerusalem-occupying regime should come to our country, then we will certainly not host that meeting.

However, the Palestinian delegation here is representing a Palestinian faction which agrees with Mr. 'Arafat. In the past, this faction used to be called the Palestine Liberation Organization, but it now operates under a different title.

The sacred system of the Islamic Republic did not close the Palestinian Embassy in Tehran, which was in fact the embassy of Yasir 'Arafat's faction, after the signing of the compromise agreement in Oslo. Mr. Salah al-Zawawi is still here as the Palestinian ambassador to Tehran and is working for Mr. 'Arafat. The government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, moreover, is treating him like any other ambassador present in our country.

The other point is that hosting any international seminar or conference in Iran requires the official approval of the cabinet. The meeting of the OIC communications ministers in Tehran in its present form and with its present participants was discussed and approved unanimously by the cabinet. The cabinet's decision was subsequently conveyed to the post, telegraph, and telephone minister, and then President Hashemi-Rafsanjani himself officially opened the meeting. The whole picture in fact shows that the Islamic Republic of Iran made a deliberate decision to host the meeting. Once we made that decision, we could not bar certain members of the OIC from entering Iran or attending the meeting just because we personally do not favor them.

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After all, we are a state, not a liberation movement. A state has certain international obligations which have to be fulfilled within an acceptable framework. There are of course some international rules and obligations which we do not accept. Not only do we pay no attention to these, but we also confront them. In other words, if adherence to some international norms required us to disregard our Islamic values, we certainly would not accept them.

However, it is not the view of the Islamic Republic of Iran that if a Palestinian delegation attended a meeting here, it would in fact be representing Israel. What kind of policy is this if we drive people toward a point where they will be left with no other option but to leave themselves completely at Israel's disposal? Because of the complex conditions present in the region at present — conditions which many people seem unable to grasp — today we see that the trend is moving in a direction which is desired more by countries opposing the compromise process than those supporting it. We must strive to strengthen this trend.

What has happened in the recent elections in occupied Palestine vindicates the theories put forward by the Islamic Republic of Iran. These theories stipulated that the shameful Oslo accord would not serve the interests of the Palestinians. The same people in 'Arafat's group who supported the Oslo accord are now tongue-tied and have started a campaign of openly criticizing the Jerusalem-occupying regime. Under these conditions, we should act in a way that will boost the whole notion of opposition to the process of seeking compromises and succumbing to humiliation and abjectness.

The Middle East Compromise

[ABRAR] [passage omitted] Under the present conditions in Israel and the region as a whole, how do you assess the long-term prospects of the anti-compromise trend? In other words, what should countries opposing the compromise process do to boost the said trend?

[Velayati] We do not think the future prospects of the region are very clear. At the same time, one must say that the position of sides seeking principled solutions has been strengthened in the region; in other words, those who believe that one should not grant any concession to the regime occupying Jerusalem and should instead strive towards regaining the rights of the Palestinians and liberating the occupied territories.

The statements currently being issued by the leaders of Arab countries favoring the compromise process are much more revolutionary than the ones we have been witnessing in the last five or six years. This is a desirable change of direction.

We predicted this situation in the course of our numerous meetings with various foreigners from the Western world, etc. during the past few years. When they asked us about our reasons for opposing the compromise process, we invariably offered various reasons and then predicted that the process will ultimately yield nothing. As we can see now, the process has in fact achieved nothing. Records of our talks with officials from the Western world and other countries are kept in the Foreign Affairs Ministry. These records show that all our predictions had said that the compromise process would get nowhere.

Today, we should try to strengthen the position of countries that are keen to form a united front, made up of Arabs and other Muslims of the region, against the regime occupying Jerusalem and its allies.

Reducing Tension

[ABRAR] Certain efforts are being made to strengthen the stances of those countries which oppose the compromise process. Syrian foreign minister Faruq al-Shar' said on 13 July that extensive negotiations were under way to coordinate the stances of the countries of the region. On the other hand, we see that Syria over the last few weeks has embarked on mediation efforts between Iran and Bahrain, and Iran and Egypt. Is there any chance of Syria's mediation being extended to other countries, for example between Iran and [Saudi] Arabia? Also, how do you assess future relations between Iran and Egypt? What interfering factors led Cairo to change its moderate stance towards Tehran?

[Velayati] Damascus feels that the new Israeli regime intends to adopt more aggressive ways and intends to start building settlements again in Israeli occupied Syrian territory. Israel has announced that it will not withdraw from the occupied territories. In other words, everything agreed upon in Madrid and Oslo has gone up in a puff of smoke. Syria, to stand up to the alliance between the Jerusalem-occupying regime and the United States, has made many efforts. We understand these efforts; we think many of them are very good. Syria's efforts to calm the atmosphere among us, Egypt and other countries of the region (I must say here that one cannot refer to these efforts as mediation) is so that it becomes clear who the real enemy is. If attention were to be given to issues other than the continuing occupation of Palestinian and Arab territory, this would undermine the struggle of the Arabs and Muslims against the Zionist regime. Therefore, Syria has embarked on a good mission, as I have said, to reduce tension and calm the atmosphere among countries that should naturally be close to each other and united.

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[ABRAR] Will Syria's efforts extend to Iran and Arabia?

[Velayati] There is no tension between Iran and Saudi Arabia. Relations might not be that warm, but there is no tension, or one can say that over the last year, relations between the two countries have become much calmer than before.

[ABRAR] What is the difference between Syria's present role and the position it adopted a few months' ago along with the countries of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] concerning the Iranian islands. Syria's stance virtually fanned the flames of tension?

[Velayati] Look! We know that in such meetings Syria plays a balancing role in the interest of relations between Iran and the Arabs. Of course, we do not care when a few small or large countries gather somewhere and issue a statement, even if it is an unfair one. We do not base our policies on statements. If certain of Iran's neighbors do not appreciate being our neighbors and become indoctrinated by foreign satans and say unfriendly things about Iran, this does not put any pressure on us. Iran formulates its policies based on Islamic and national interests, one of these being to avoid tension with our neighbors. If a powerful country such as Iran adopts a policy of not having tension with its smaller neighbors, then this policy benefits those smaller countries more than it does Iran. Now if those small countries do not wish to benefit from Iran's good will, well it is up to them; we have nothing to lose. The only problem that arises here is that this situation gives more excuses to the aliens to extend their presence in the region — and this harms all the countries of the Islamic world. Those aliens have clarified that they are after their own interests; they are not here to safeguard the interests of regional countries.

In any case, Syria's stance over the years has been positive.

Critical Dialogue

[ABRAR] Recently, we have been witnessing some differences of opinion between America and the European Union on the issue of relations with Iran.

The EU insists that the policy of critical dialogue with Iran will be successful. Recently, Italian Foreign Minister Lamberto Dini, responding to objections by an Iranian counterrevolutionary grouplet called the National Iranian Conference, clarified that the present policy of Europe towards Iran would continue. Furthermore, he expressed optimism about the future prospects of this policy and said he was hopeful that dialogue between the two sides would yield fruit.

Is this a fact? Also could you please tell us what you think of the EU's critical dialogue policy?

[Velayati] In the entire Middle East and Persian Gulf, no country enjoys the important and sensitive status of Iran. In this region, you will not find any other country that has land and maritime borders with 15 different states. You will not find any other country, which in addition to having so many neighbors and such vast natural resources, is also the most stable country in its particular part of the world.

I will give you an example of instability in another corner of the world so we may understand and appreciate the importance of stability.

In the central and eastern parts of Africa, we have Burundi and Rwanda. Next to these is Somalia. Altogether, a whole set of neighboring countries in that part of the world has for many years been suffering from instability. This has brought about instability in the whole region. [passage omitted] Now, in our region, where there are problems in Afghanistan, Iraq, Central Asia (Tajikistan), and the Persian Gulf (with the ever increasing foreign military presence) and where, in the meantime, we also have Palestine and the long standing occupation of its territory by the Zionists, as well as Turkey's internal problems with the Kurdish workers (PKK) [Kurdish Workers Party], the presence of a strong and stable country such as Iran will prevent chaos in the region, prevent the destruction of stability and calm within it, and impede the disturbance of the general economic balance in the world. Thus, security in Iran means security in the region. Disregarding Iran is like disregarding security in the region and in the world. The Europeans know, if they succumb to the machinations of the United States, the future of their relations with this region and the provision of their sources of energy will become unclear.

The Americans, too, will suffer if their security in this region is threatened. However, the foreign policy of the United States does not, in fact, arise from vital U.S. national interests. Rather, it follows the rivalry between the Democratic Party and the Republican Party, who seem to be competing to give the largest number of concessions to the Zionists.

The Europeans understand this and they are not willing to buckle under U.S. pressure. They also know that, if they were to buckle under, this would not be the end but only the beginning, and U.S. pressure would increase with every passing day; especially so, because the United States wishes to use economic levers to advance its own particular political aims. This is something that would be to the detriment of all the countries of the world and, especially, industrial countries. This is why

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six out of seven industrial countries have stood up to the United States, because they know, if there is one country they can count on in this region, it is Iran and that stability, peace, and development in Iran will benefit stability, peace, and development in the entire region.

[ABRAR] What do you think about the European Union [EU] hoping that its talks with Iran will bear results?

[Velayati] You see, following several rounds of talks with the Europeans, both our position and theirs have become clearer than before. We have overcome some of the problems. Other outstanding problems of the past have today lost some of their former importance and prominence...

[ABRAR] Like Salman Rushdie's case?

[Velayati] There were many issues that were topical before but are not so now and this too could be put down to the negotiations that have been carried out. In this connection, they [Europeans] understood that our stances were based on principles which we will not deviate from. In certain cases, they realized that they misunderstood us, but these misunderstandings have also been removed. In other cases they realized that it was in their interests not to make a mountain out of a molehill for no reason. If each country was to seek pretexts, no one country would ever reach understanding with another. Countries should understand each other. Today, our standing with Europe is, without question, better than before. Yes, certainly better than before! If there are any problems, the two sides have to solve these. It is normal for two important countries which have all-round political, economic, cultural and technological relations and which cooperate over regional issues, to encounter some obstacles. It is only with mutual sagacity and understanding that these problems can be resolved without damaging overall relations. What we understand of the positions of the governments of Iran and Germany is that they intend to preserve their long-term, friendly relations.

[ABRAR] In fact, it was thought at the time [reference to the Fallahian case] that the German judiciary cannot direct Germany's foreign policy.

[Velayati] Yes, that is correct. The judiciary exists everywhere — in Germany, Iran and other places. The judiciary and foreign policy pursue their own respective responsibilities everywhere. We should try not to allow either side to be influenced by the adverse suggestions of those who oppose relations between the two countries.

The aggression of Turkish helicopter gunships against Iranian soil

[ABRAR] Mr Velayati! Recent aggression by Turkish helicopters against Iranian soil and the bombardment of "Selvana" region resulted in six civilians killed and 15 others wounded. The Turkish military command has officially denied the aggression and a delegation from Turkey's Ministry of Interior made some promises before leaving [Tehran]. Really, what are we to do about these incidents which Turkey is creating? It is clear that the aggression by the Turkish helicopters was an effort by the military to put the Turkish government in a dilemma in its relations with Iran (of course this is one of the existing analyses). But what are we going to do if Turkey wants to repeat such things? Have they been made to understand that next time they will receive an appropriate response?

[Velayati] You said it is clear that the Turkish army wanted to...

[ABRAR] Forgive me, but I also said that this was one of the analyses.

[Velayati] Alright, let us say that according to one analysis the Turkish military wanted to put the Turkish government in a dilemma. But it is not clear that this analysis is based on convincing evidence or rationale. In our relations with Turkey, at the time of Mr. Ozal or Mr. Demirel, we have always felt that they wanted to maintain their friendly relations. This is because Turkey has problems with its neighbors and Iran is the least problematic. You know that Turkey has problems with Iraq and has repeatedly entered its territory in the pursuit of PKK members. Turkey has problems with Syria, Greece, and other countries.

Mr. Demirel has said repeatedly that Turkey has had friendly relations with Iran for the past 100 years and will continue to do so. This is the Turkish intention as far as we can see from the statements by government officials and other evidence. It is also logical for Turkey to have good neighborly relations with a neighboring country, particularly as the two countries are both Muslim and have strong historical links. It is therefore necessary for the two countries to cooperate. Iran and Turkey are both members of the ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization] and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. In the context of the ECO and in terms of volume, we have the highest level of trade with Turkey. There are many positive factors.

At this end, it is one of our top priorities to maintain these friendly relations. Neither of the two sides wishes to create tension in these relations. If there is an incident,

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it must be resolved through wisdom, understanding and consideration.

Initially the Turkish military officials denied the incident but at the behest and insistence of the Iranian government and the Foreign Ministry as well as the embassy in Ankara, they were forced to send their deputy foreign minister to our country. When he was leaving Iran he did not say that they were sure the incident had not taken place.

[ABRAR] The Turkish official said the incident was similar to the one in the year 1372 [ending March 1994].

[Velayati] Yes.

[ABRAR] They apologized immediately then but not this time!

[Velayati] Even then an investigating committee came to Iran. They have now said they are prepared to send a delegation. But it was the Iranian government which announced its agreement after a delay and this was done on Saturday [13 July].

Now, some people might say that if we are certain, what is the need for an investigation? Of course we are certain. But the opposite side too must become assured. We must provide acceptable evidence and avoid bias. We are certain about the case but we have to make the Turkish government understand. As I said earlier, there is no doubt that the Turkish government does not want more problems while it has difficulties with its other neighbors.

The Iranian case is different, particularly since Iran is not looking for such tensions. It is in their interest to put an end to these incidents and we understood this from their statements.

Mr. Borujerdi, the deputy foreign minister in charge of Asia-Pacific affairs, is to go to Turkey on Thursday [18 July] to hand over a message from His Excellency Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani to the new Turkish Prime Minister Erbakan.

[ABRAR] Forgive me. In the first incident Turkey said that there had been a misunderstanding. The events of the recent case also indicate that they will act in a similar fashion. But what will be their excuse next time? Why are they always committing the mistakes and not us?

[Velayati] The reason is that they have security trouble on their southeast border. They are always...

[ABRAR] Forgive me. It is unfortunate to say that the very politicians to whom you referred made accusations against Iran last year and this includes Mrs Tansu Ciller when her party was in the previous coalition government. The Turkish army has also made accusations against Iran in several cases.

[Velayati] Look! The Turkish government confesses, and it is true, that it has a problem with the PKK [Kurdistan Worker's Party] in the southeastern regions of the country. A large section of the Turkish army has been engaged in this domestic problem for a number of years. They are fighting the PKK on Turkish and Iraqi soil, near our border. There has been an internal war, sometimes low in intensity and sometimes more serious, for a number of years against the Kurdish rebels.

We don't think that there is a decision in Turkey to create tension. No intelligent government is going to create tension with one of its powerful neighbors while it has to face domestic as well as foreign difficulties. This has been proven in reality. In contrast to your analysis, we don't think that the Turkish government or army is seeking any tension in its relations with Iran. They want to have friendly relations.

[ABRAR] Now that we are discussing Turkey, tell us about the Turkish diplomat who committed a crime in Tehran.

[Velayati] The case is being pursued through the judicial process; political and consular action. But the accused is outside the domain of our jurisdiction. We are, however, seeking justice.

Contradictions in Baku

[ABRAR] Radio Baku recently carried a strongly-worded item against Iran which spoke about southern Azerbaijan! [reference to Iran's Azarbayjan Province] Yet when the officials of that republic sit and discuss things, they talk about friendship with Iran and how to increase this friendship. How do you view this contradiction between what is said and what is done?

[Velayati] What radio Baku is doing is not very nice.

[ABRAR] Even the Pan-Turkists are freely active there.

[Velayati] Yes. There are some stateless individuals on the other side, who, at different points in time, adopted one political stance or another. At one point, they were members of the Tudeh [Communist] Party [of Iran]; at another, they were members of the Democrat Faction [Ferqeh-e Democrat — early 20th century political grouping in Iran], and at yet another, they were members of a Muslim group. Now they may still have taken up another ideology. What these people share in common in their escapades and affiliations to different ideologies is that they are selling out their country and will say whatever is required to be said by anyone who pays them.

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On this side, we see that in our own Azarbayjan, in Tabriz and Ardebil and various other places, there are many popular-based groups, even Majles candidates, who, in their [election] campaigns, called for a return of cities dismembered from Iran. As a government, we do not endorse this policy and method, but, after all, the Islamic feelings and sentiments of the inhabitants of our Azarbayjan are very strong. We can only declare Iran's official position which is that it respects the territorial integrity of other countries, including neighbors such as the Azerbaijan Republic and there is no other official in the Islamic Republic of Iran who will say otherwise. But free-thinking people and various circles — from universities to Friday prayer gatherings, people in the streets and the bazaars — express their feelings and, just as I said, even Majles candidates, in their election campaigns, called for the return of those cities that were separated from Iran.

As far as we are concerned, we call for good and very close relations with the Azerbaijan Republic. We call on the two countries not to interfere in each others' internal affairs. Of course, just as we said, the Islamic Republic of Iran is a powerful country which does not interfere in the internal affairs of others. But certain smaller countries around us may be influenced by the propaganda insinuations of this or that and, as a consequence, take certain actions which are not ultimately in the interest of their relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

However, as far as we know, Mr. Heydar Aliyev and his government do seek to have friendly relations with Iran, just as Iran wants to have friendly relations with the government of Azerbaijan.

Relations between Iran and Iraq

[ABRAR] As a last question — would you comment on relations between Iran and Iraq and the question of the POWs. In all this, what is important for our people is the issue of pilgrimage to the holy shrines. How is this problem to be resolved?

[Velayati] A delegation headed by one of the officials of the Hajj and Pilgrimage Organization was sent by us to Iraq and conducted some talks. But these talks have not yet been finalized. Negotiations aimed at resolving problems between us are proceeding at a slow pace — not because the Islamic Republic of Iran is not trying. We are, indeed, putting all our efforts into the progress of negotiations aimed at solving the remaining problems, including the issue of the POWs.

Iran: Daily Replies to Foreign Ministry's Comments

LD2407214496 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 20 Jul 96 p 15

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI Replies to Foreign Ministry's Comments: 'Reply to the JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI's Editorial and 10 Points Put to the Foreign Ministry'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] During the third week of Tir [21 June-21 July], JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI published a number of articles criticizing the performance of the Foreign Ministry regarding two events, both related to the Palestinian issue.

One of the events was the visit to Tehran of Imad al-Faluji, communication minister of the so-called Palestinian self-rule authorities, in order to participate in a session of the communication ministers of OIC member states. And the other issue was the interest shown by officials in charge of our country's foreign policy with regard to a proposal made by the Syrian foreign minister for the establishment of ties [between Iran and] the Egyptian regime. Responding to this interest and [Syria's] mediation, Mubarak's regime announced that because Iran supports terrorism, interferes in other country's affairs and puts pressures on shaykhdoms in the Persian Gulf, it does not want to establish political ties with it [Iran].

JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI published a number of articles on 19, 20, and 21 Tir [9, 10, and 11 July] criticizing the performance of the ministry with regard to these issues. It rejected, by providing reasons, the statement issued by the Foreign Ministry spokesman, who said that the visit of Imad al-Faluji was justifiable because the government of [Yasir] 'Arafat was a member of the OIC. The paper also rejected the Foreign Ministry's statement on the issue of establishing ties with the Egyptian regime. It was said in the statement that Iran's policy had not changed and that "the more Egypt distances itself from the Zionist regime, the more it can count on having closer ties with Iran."

In addition JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI allocated its editorials on 23 and 24 Tir [13 and 14 July] to criticizing some performances by those in charge of our country's foreign policy. One article was entitled: "Foreign Policy, Offensive or Defensive?" and the second one was "Foreign Policy and Criterion of Isolation." The Foreign Ministry's press and information office sent a letter on 22 Tir 1375 [12 July] to the paper reacting to the first three articles. JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI's public relation office replied on the same date and said that because the [ministry's] reply contained insulting terms the paper could not publish it. Also the publication of the reply will undermine the Foreign Ministry because

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it does not enter into discussion over the contents of the articles and instead it uses nasty and harsh terms. At the same time, the paper's public relation office stated the paper's readiness to publish a logical reply if it receives a reply from the ministry's press and information office.

On 23 Tir another reply was sent by the ministry's press and information office responding to an article published on 23 Tir [13 July] in JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI and this time too, because it did not relate to the subject of the article, it was not publishable. This was stated in a letter dated 24 Tir to the ministry's press and information office and once again the paper said that it was ready to publish any logical replies by the ministry dealing with the contents of the articles. (Copies of these communication are still available in public relation office of JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI)

The Foreign Ministry Information and Press department, instead of correcting its rejoinder and sending it to JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI, sent it to the newspaper IRAN, and it was published in that newspaper on 24 and 26 Tir [14 and 16 June]. Of course, after realizing the spelling mistakes in its reply — from the letters written by the public relations office of JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI — that department corrected them and sent it to IRAN newspaper, without a word of thanks to the public relations office of JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI. (The newspaper has refrained from printing the reply which contained spelling mistakes in order to save the Foreign Ministry's face, but if Foreign Ministry officials want they can have copies.) Although the action of IRAN newspaper to print the document was unethical from a journalistic standpoint, but since IRAN is a government organ perhaps it is obliged to print such documents. In any case, we have no objections to the action by IRAN, but we deem it necessary to recommend that, before printing any such rejoinders, the honorable editors of that newspaper find out why the recipient has not printed it.

The Foreign Ministry Information and Press department has also sent a letter in response to the lead article "Foreign Policy and the Criteria for Isolation," published on 24 Tir 1375 [14 June 1996] which, although fortunately did not contain any spelling mistakes or insults, was irrelevant and even referred to personal issues. But since it met the minimum criteria for civility in correspondence, this newspaper will print it and draw the attention of its dear readers to a number of points about the lead article and the response. We also point out that JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI is still prepared to print the Foreign Ministry's response to previous articles if it is pertinent and does not contain insults.

This is the text of a reply:

To the editor in chief of JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI

Greetings. The editorial of 24 Tir 1375 [14 July 1996] under the title of "Foreign Policy and Criterion for Isolation," which was in line with a series of articles and commentaries published in the past week about the Foreign Ministry, reflects the fact that the daily JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI is insisting on finding fault with the country's foreign policy in an unusual form.

The publication of five accusatory (partly offensive) articles in the past week in order to undermine the performance of the Foreign Ministry confirms that the daily judges the performance of the apparatus of the country's foreign policy merely on the basis of pre-determined ideas and without any comprehensive outlook. It uses any indecent methods to achieve this to undermine the ministry. The article entitled: "Foreign Ministry and an Illogical Justification" published on 20 Tir [10 July] is an obvious example of defamation used against Iran's Foreign Ministry.

Although the latest article, mentioned at the beginning of this reply, has a more balanced tune, it still follows the same line as that of previous articles in order to discredit our country's foreign policy. It has tried to ignore the role of our country's foreign relations in realizing the aims of the Islamic revolution.

In the article, a subject has been discussed and a conclusion has been reached as if the Foreign Ministry believes that the Islamic Republic of Iran is an isolated country. And it should resort to any method to emerge from this isolation. On the basis of this incorrect perception, the daily has attacked the Foreign Ministry.

This is at a time when the performance of the ministry over the past years is a testimony to a foreign policy that has authority, self-confidence, and political honor at the international arena.

The comments made by the guardian of the cause of the world of Muslims, Ayatollah Khamene'i, about the performance of the Foreign Ministry is the strongest argument and reason proving this point.

It could be said with confidence that in the history of this country, its foreign policy has never been so progressive, strong, firm, and based on principles.

The question is whether the active and effective presence at international and regional levels of those in charge of our foreign policy, the expansion of ties with many countries in the world for the interest of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the consolidation of the high position that our country occupies in the international arena, could be the result of a belief in political isolation of Iran by those in charge of foreign policy?

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Insistence on safeguarding the interests of the world of Islam and round-the-clock, optimistic efforts to this end show clearly that the Foreign Ministry not only does not believe in isolation, but is of the opinion that Iran holds an important position in the arena of international relations and that, throughout the contemporary history of Iranian foreign policy, it had never reached such a lofty peak and such a degree of honor.

The writer has accused foreign policy officials of becoming fond of establishing ties with Egypt. Which is greater: The Foreign Ministry's fondness for ties with Egypt or the fondness felt by people who like to visit Egypt, but do not wish to have this reported! How strange it is, too, that this accusation is exactly in line with that regime's recent propaganda and insinuations. All one needs to do is to compare this piece with the things written in the Egyptian press and the recent remarks made by that country's officials for it to become clear why, in publishing such pieces, that paper is unwittingly adding grist to the enemy's mill. Why does the writer of the piece not make any mention of the Foreign Ministry's explicit and principled stance that "the greater the distance Egypt puts between itself and the Zionist regime, the greater will be its chances of rapprochement with the Islamic Republic of Iran"? Is there any correlation between this official stance of the Foreign Ministry and the contents of that paper's editorial?

The Foreign Ministry is proud that it has made "honor, wisdom, and interests" the motto of its actions and, abiding by the wishes of the founder of the Islamic Republic [Khomeyni], the eminent leader [Khamene'i], and the honorable president [Rafsanjani], it has been able to portray the international image of the sacred system of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the basis of the fundamental principles governing the system, and it considers itself duty bound to safeguard the honor of the Islamic republic in the international arena under any circumstances.

[Signed] The Foreign Ministry's Press and Information Office

Ten Points for the Foreign Ministry

1. As you can see in the above reply, this paper has been accused of finding fault with the country's foreign policy — and in an abnormal way at that. Reading the text of the editorial in question (which has been published alongside the reply for this very reason) proves the baselessness of this claim. After making a careful study of the meaning of "isolation" and the relevant revolutionary principles, the editorial has noted that "unfortunately, methods are at times used by our country's foreign policy officials that are not in line with these principles." The expression "at times" is not the same as "always" in the Persian language for the Foreign Ministry Information and Press Office to deduce "finding fault with foreign policy" from this. It seems as if the said office considers its ministry to be immune from mistakes and it considers criticism of some of its actions to be "finding fault with foreign policy." It, therefore, sees five articles criticizing two subjects as something abnormal!

2. The reply suggests that this newspaper's approach to the performance of the Foreign Ministry is unconstructive, insulting, and unpleasant, and it suggests that the piece entitled: "The Foreign Ministry and Illogical Arguments" is the clearest proof of this. The points raised by the newspaper regarding the matters under criticism were, first, that the Islamic Republic of Iran is not under any obligation to welcome all the members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference [OIC], regardless of whether they have betrayed the Palestinian nation, and that the argument that 'Arafat's government is a member of the OIC, so his minister must be allowed to visit, is illogical. Second, expressing a wish to establish diplomatic relations with the Camp David regime of Egypt is not in keeping with the principles of the Islamic revolution and the officials of the Foreign Ministry should not, instead of sincerely admitting to their mistake, raise issues that are untrue.

It can be seen that, neither in the present reply, nor in the replies published in IRAN, these points have not been answered and it has only been claimed that such methods are unconstructive and unpleasant! Our interpretation of this reply is that the Foreign Ministry wishes all newspapers to endorse their actions or their published statements, even if they are unconstructive, insulting, and unpleasant! Such an expectation from the newspapers of an Islamic and revolutionary country is not worthy of a ministry of the system of the Islamic republic and the JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI will never succumb to such expectations.

3. "Attempting to discredit our country's foreign policy," and the sentence saying: "The Foreign Ministry believes that the Islamic Republic of Iran is an isolated country and should do anything possible to end this state of isolation," are some of the things that the text of the reply by the Press and Information Office has attributed to the article published by JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI.

However, the exact words of the article in question were: "Those believing that the Islamic Republic of Iran needs relations with dependent and rootless regimes, such as Mubarak's government, are in fact influenced by American and Zionist propaganda. They, moreover, believe that we are isolated and should therefore try to

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establish ties with such regimes in order to end our state of isolation."

Our dear readers would agree that this paragraph, or in fact the whole article, never mentioned anything about the Foreign Ministry considering the Islamic Republic of Iran as an isolated country that should resort to any means to end its isolation. It is therefore not clear which part of the article has given the author or the authors of the reply the impression that this newspaper has intended to discredit our country's foreign policy.

4. The text of the reply claims that the performance of the Foreign Ministry during the past few years has exhibited the political strength, integrity, and self-confidence of Iran on the international political arena. The reply adds that the viewpoints of the vali-e amr of Muslims, his eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, vis-a-vis the performance of the Foreign Ministry, is the strongest and the most indisputable ground for this claim.

The subject of self-confidence is highly important, but its full and thorough analysis would require a great deal of time and effort. The editorial in today's issue [headlined: "Officials and Self-Confidence"] briefly alludes to this point and shows that those who seek support from great personalities [Khamene'i, for instance] in order to defend their actions in fact lack self-confidence. This is because if they really have something to say in defense of their actions, they should have no need to resort to the words of great personalities such as the eminent leader of the revolution.

The eminent leader is a valuable asset for the revolution, and various organizations and institutions should not use this great asset for their own benefit. The actions themselves should demonstrate the correctness of the path traversed by the officials. In addition, the eminent leader of the revolution has never given a wholesale approval to all the actions of the Foreign Ministry. His support for a given ministry never means that the ministry in question has been completely faultless.

5. The authors of the reply have tried to attribute the might of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the world to the performance of the Foreign Ministry. This, unfortunately, is a major mistake, which is tantamount to disregarding the profound influence of his holiness Imam Khomeyni among the world nations, the extinguished role of the anti-American and anti-Zionist stances of his eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, the exalted leader of the revolution, and finally the resistance of the revolutionary people of Iran against the enemies of the revolution.

This is precisely the point that was clearly analyzed in our editorial entitled: "Foreign Policy and the Concept of Isolation." [as published; original headline read: "Foreign Policy and the Criterion for Isolation"] What we said can be considered as an important criterion for evaluating our country's foreign policy. (The above-mentioned editorial has been published again on this page.)

6. The reply adds: "...[paper's ellipses] Not only has the Foreign Ministry never believed in isolation, but also maintains that Iran enjoys a high position in the international arena and that in its contemporary history, Iran's foreign policy has never reached such a high and respectable point."

We are pleased that the ministry announces that it does not believe in isolation. We have mentioned this point, in the editorial that has been criticized in this reply, that system of the Islamic Republic of Iran has an authoritative presence at the international level. However, we feel it is necessary to add that if there were not any weaknesses in the performance of the ministry, our country's foreign policy could have reached higher peaks. There is much evidence proving this claim; however, if these discussions were to continue, we would resort to giving examples and evidence and explaining specific cases.

7. Those who prepared the reply have finally dragged the discussion from the area of foreign policy to a personal argument. They say: "Is the fondness of the Foreign Ministry for establishing ties with Egypt greater then the fondness felt by people who visit Egypt and do not wish to have it reported?" It is a reference to a visit to Egypt by the editor in chief of JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Aban 1374 [23 Oct-21 Nov 1995]. The visit took place in order for him to have a clear assessment of the situation in Egypt and to find out to what extent the stances of the daily with regard to establishing political ties with Mubarak's regime conform to reality. The result of the assessment was that Mubarak's regime desperately needs to establish ties with Iran. It could overcome some problems that it has with a number of its neighbors and take advantage of this relationship for home consumption in order to crush revolutionary Egyptian Muslims. It also uses it [the establishment of ties] in order to harm Iran's anti-Zionist approach in the region and in the Palestinian nation.

It is on the basis of this assessment that the daily JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI has emphasized and will emphasize its stance, opposing the establishment of political ties with Egypt.

Concerning the non-publication of the report of the visit, the Foreign Ministry has information about the foreign visits of the editor in chief of JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI and knows that his lack of interest in reporting

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such reports does not only concern his visit to Egypt. Therefore, it is very interesting that the Foreign Ministry raises the issue in its reply and turns the important discussion of foreign policy into a personal argument and a stance against an individual!

For the information of those who prepared the ministry's reply, we must add the point that the editor in chief of JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI does not have any interest in reporting his visits or his speeches inside the country. And whenever a report has been published about him, it is has been because at the insistence of others. In this regard we draw the attention of those who wrote the reply to the commands by Imam Hoysen, may peace be upon him, who said: "We weren't afraid of death, so be free in your life." [sentence in Arabic]

8. This question has also been forward in the reply: "How come the author of the editorial says nothing about the clear and principled stance of the Foreign Ministry, which states that the more Egypt moves away from Israel, the greater its hope of coming close to the Islamic Republic of Iran?"

The answer is clear. On the one hand, the Foreign Ministry announces this position, and on the other hand expresses readiness to establish ties with the Egyptian regime, while there is no sign anywhere of Cairo moving away from the Zionist regime. What does this discrepancy between actions and words reveal to us? In view of the fact that this mode of operation gave Mubarak — that is to say, the butcher of the Muslim revolutionaries of Egypt and the footboy of Zionism — the nerve to respond to our Foreign Ministry's olive branch by saying that Iran supports terrorism, interferes in the affairs of other countries, and is putting pressure on [the Persian Gulf] shaykhdoms. Can one still accept the Foreign Ministry's claim that it considers integrity as its foremost priority in its working agenda?

9. The reply claims that JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI is adding grist to the enemy's mill by helping the Egyptian regime's attempts to create an adverse atmosphere. In previous replies too, the Foreign Ministry Press and Information Office had claimed that critical articles by JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI about the actions of the Foreign Ministry were counter-revolutionary utterances resembling remarks by the grouplets active in the early days of the revolution!

According to this assertion, no newspaper should be allowed to criticize the performance of the Foreign Ministry, because any criticism is tantamount to adding grist to the enemy's mill! This, however, is not something that our public opinion would accept and our press would give in to. The performance record of JOMHURI-E ESLAMI is so distinguished that allegations such as publication of counter-revolutionary material and the utterances of the grouplets of the early days of the revolution will not produce any results for the authors of the reply. These allegations are so funny that they even bring genuine laughter to mothers bereaving for the their lost child!

10. In conclusion, we draw the attention of the officials of the Foreign Ministry to the point that the question of reciprocal relations with the press generates its own specific subtleties.

We would not be helping the government to achieve its goals if we were constantly to accuse a paper or a group or an individual of being our enemy, and consider ourselves as one with the government.

The Foreign Ministry, which believes in the policy of peaceful coexistence with foreigners, cannot treat us the way it has done in the latest reply of its press and information office. It cannot treat us in this way, especially not those among us whose clear records show that even their strongest criticisms were borne out of care and compassion for the system and officials rather than anything else.

JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI has, in the course of its 17-year life, given the greatest support to the Foreign Ministry, through its sympathetic and alert evaluations and appraisals. Those who cannot tolerate criticism and consider it as hostility towards themselves, are not aware of this pithy saying of one of the infallible imams: "Your friend is the one who tells you the truth and not one who always believes what you say."

It is an aberration if we imagine that the sycophants and yes-men are our friends whereas the critics are enemies! On this same basis, we advise the officials of the Foreign Ministry to benefit from the capabilities of the press to promote the objectives of the Islamic Republic's system and correct their own performances, and in order to succeed in this, they should pay attention to the subtleties of the department dealing with the press. If the press are warning today that the membership of Egypt and 'Arafat's self-rule authority in the Organization of the Islamic Conference does not justify entertaining the thought of allowing Mubarak and 'Arafat to travel to the Islamic Republic of Iran, then you should accept this logic and you should not give these two butchers of Muslim revolutionaries and two bell-boys of Zionism, permission to enter the land of Islamic Iran to take part in the OIC conference. This is what the people of Iran feel and a correct foreign policy is one that is compatible with what people truly want to say and not one that has been formulated to please this or that international organization or assembly.

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You know very well, very well that in this latest round of meetings between the heads of the Arab League in Cairo, Mubarak did not invite Saddam Husayn whose country is, nonetheless, a member of the Arab League.

You will note that if we consider as illogical your justification regarding Imad Faluji's trip to Tehran and now, rumors of 'Arafat and Mubarak's trips to Tehran on the excuse that they are members of the OIC, we are being very firmly logical and our logic is even compatible with international norms.

So, step out of the confines of expertise and heed the warnings of newspapers which are the tongues of the people. And don't ask your sympathetic and well-wishing friends to ignore your weaknesses — the holy Prophet said: "He who presents me with my shortcomings is my favored brother."

That's all — Editorial Board of the JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI.

Iran: Foreign Ministry Responds to Criticism

LD2507220796 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 22 Jul 96 pp 2, 14

["Another Reply by the Foreign Ministry to JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI's Editorial and Eight More Points Put to the Foreign Ministry" — JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI headline]

[FBIS Translated Text] Respected Editor in Chief of JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI: Peace be upon you.

After the publication of the recent series of articles by JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI against the Foreign Ministry and that paper's refusal to publish the replies given by the [Foreign Ministry's] Press and Information Department, fortunately, on 20 July, we witnessed the publication of the reply, dated 14 July. That (latest reply) was in response to an article entitled "Foreign Policy and the Criterion for Isolation" published by that newspaper.

The reply had been printed along with the views of the paper's editorial board under the title "10 Points Put to the Foreign Ministry."

If all the articles published by the respected JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI and replies to them by the Foreign Ministry bear just one result, namely a gradual tendency of the articles of that paper to move from casting accusations and labeling toward making serious and dignified criticism, then we deem it as a good omen and welcome it. How much better it would have been if from the very start that paper, instead of publishing five-line articles and calling the Foreign Ministry a wrongdoer, a demagogue, and simple-minded, it had carried out a fair and impartial criticism of the foreign policy record.

The respected editorial board has given the reason for its refusal to publish the earlier Foreign Ministry replies as their insulting tone. If that is the paper's understanding of our replies, then the natural expectation is for that paper to practice more of what it preaches itself. If the paper is to criticize foreign policy unfairly, yet at the same time refuse to publish the defenses made of those policies, then it must be admitted that the paper has put aside logic and critical discourse completely. That is because it has a tendency to say what it wishes and not listen to anything else.

We heartily recommend you approach issues wisely and not attack the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran hastily and in such a way as to mar its respect and credibility.

We do not believe that taking away the trust toward the foreign policy establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran is the wish of that paper, but in our view, the recent unfair attacks by that paper, in practice, do just that.

The Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran does not expect thanks and praise. What, however, is motivating the paper to look for any opportunity to attack the Foreign Ministry, and, by disregarding the endeavors made to eliminate obstacles and problems in relation to the country's foreign relations, exacerbate the exhaustion and pressures on those who serve the ruling system, which are caused by the baseless accusations of the enemies of the revolution?

Just like you, we also believe that: "The leader of the revolution [Khamene'i] is an invaluable asset and no one and no organ should squander this tremendous asset on itself." Nevertheless, when JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI — with its recorded affiliation to the exalted leader of the revolution and its particular credibility in public opinion — instead of following the example of the exalted leader's kind attention to foreign policy, accuses the Foreign Ministry of demagoguery, lack of truthfulness, and marring the prestige of the ruling system, is there any other choice for us but to bring to the attention of that paper the role of the country's authorities in the crucial issue of foreign policy?

Moreover, we consider following the ruling system to be a value and opposing and disobeying it in any shape or form — even in a revolutionary form — to be an anti-value. That is why, in such cases, we rely on that criterion. However, contrary to the actions of that paper, we do not regard opposing a value by couching it in revolutionary terms or becoming a slave to our own guesswork and tendencies instead of coordinating

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ourselves with that value as moral courage or self-assurance.

It has been suggested in your recent article that if any successes have been achieved at the international level, they were because of the revolution's strength and authority; and if there have been any lack of successes then this should be attributed to the Foreign Ministry. We accept this. However, it is your duty as a newspaper to be fair. Isn't a daily, whose name and foundation are blended with the sacredness of the glory of Islamic revolution, pursuing a wrong path if it distorts public opinion about the respectability of an apparatus that conveys the message of greatness of revolution beyond the border to other nations?

Regarding Iranian-Egyptian ties, described by the daily as a policy based on double standards in terms of action and deed, it is necessary to say that what has been mentioned in the Foreign Ministry's statement is the position of the ministry: "The more Egypt distances itself from the Zionist regime, the more it can be hopeful of having closer ties with Iran."

In addition, rapid developments have occurred in the region because of changes within the Zionist regime. In view of the stances adopted by the Arab countries toward the Zionist regime (unprecedented in the past years), Syria decided to pursue a diplomacy of rapprochement between Iran and the Arabs, especially between Iran and Bahrain and Egypt, in order to unite the countries in the region against the Zionist regime and in order to put pressure on that regime. Therefore, Syria embarked on some efforts in this direction. We have also welcomed such diplomacy, which will strengthen solidarity among the Islamic and Arab countries. The reason is that we know that the enemies of Islam are not happy with the strengthening of Arab-Islamic ties, especially after the recent developments.

Therefore, on the basis of these changes and developments, a diplomacy that looks into the future with an opinion that has been formed in the past cannot be described as an active, aggressive, and probing diplomacy. Such a diplomacy must take into account the development and changes that have activated Syrian diplomacy in the region and have made Egypt's position closer to those of Syria. In view of these developments and changes, diplomacy should pursue the aims of the foreign policy.

You have written in your latest article: "Apparently the [press and information] office [of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs] considers itself to be immune to mistake, and that it interprets criticism of some of its performance as an attempt to find fault with the foreign policy."

We don't claim that we are immune to mistakes. At the same time, we don't expect the performance of the ministry not to be criticized or discussed. However, we request, sincerely, that the editorial board of the daily thinks about the meanings of the recent accusations against the ministry. Are these accusations and insults considered sympathetic criticism and assessment of the performance of the ministry, or are they aimed at discrediting an aspect of Iran's foreign policy before the Iranian nation and other Islamic nations?

Regarding the issue of Egypt not inviting Iraq to participate in the Arab League summit and comparing it with Imad al-Faluji's visit to Iran, it should be noted that, in view of the Iraqi regime's performance and the tension that exists in Iraq's ties with many of the Arab countries, such an action by Mubarak was to the satisfaction and with the tacit agreement of many of the members of the Arab League.

Inviting Iraq would have meant in practice the nonparticipation of a large number of the Arab countries in the summit. Mubarak did not want to make a failure of the Cairo summit simply by extending an invitation to the Iraqi president and not knowing whether he could participate or not. Furthermore, it is interesting that the daily considers Mubarak's behavior in this case as being in accordance with the international norms.

You have advised us that "we should make use of the press capacity in order to proceed with the aims of the system of the Islamic revolution and in order to correct our performance."

We are grateful for this advice by the daily. For some time, we have organized a number of sessions in the ministry in which press officials participate. The aim is to brief them about positions of our foreign policy, and at the same time, to hear their views and opinions.

Unfortunately, most of the time, JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI is not represented at these sessions. We hope that it will take part regularly and seriously in these sessions to have a greater understanding.

You know, at the same time JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI was publishing a series of articles about the presence in Tehran of Imad al-Faluji, the communications minister of 'Arafat's cabinet, in order to participate in the conference of communications ministers of member states of the OIC [Organization of the Islamic Conference] held in Tehran, one of the reputable evening dailies also voiced its critical view but kept within the principles and etiquette of journalism. We were not offended by it at all. We sent a reply in the same style and gave our reasons, which were published.

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The fact that you have written that "the Ministry of Foreign Affairs wants the newspapers to approve whenever it does something or issues a statement, otherwise it would be considered an insulting, indecent, and defamatory action" is baseless.

What is true is that we differentiate between constructive and meaningful criticism, and a criticism that is based on destructive methods and methods of finding fault [with the foreign policy].

At has been mentioned in the ministry's reply dated 12 July 96, which was not published in the paper, respect for the pen and the high regard for freedom of the press should not change into an instrument for targeting friends instead of enemies.

[Signed] Press and Information Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Eight More Points To Put to the Foreign Ministry:

1. As our respected readers can see, the contents of the Foreign Ministry's reply, although still not that logical, are more acceptable than those in its earlier replies. Although it is not a policy of JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI to continue with such discussions, at the same time, it is ready to publish any reply that does not go beyond the framework of the subject and observes the bounds of politeness and ethics. The first reply by the Foreign Ministry contained 35 cases of insults against JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI, some of which provoked strong objections from many of the revolutionary forces, even from within the Foreign Ministry itself. If the opportunity arises, we will publish them in order to make clear how this improper method hurts the pure feelings of the people.

2. In the present reply, the Foreign Ministry has accepted many of the recommendations made by JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in its "10 Points to be Put to the Foreign Ministry." If it had accepted those points from the start, had adhered to them, and instead of resorting to the destructive method of responding to newspaper articles, had stated its issues logically, then it would not have been forced to defend itself by feigning innocence and take the criticism of some of its ill-considered measures as "attacks against the Foreign Ministry."

3. There is a glaring difference between the affiliation of JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI to the exalted leader of the revolution and the efforts made by the Foreign Ministry to relate all its measures to that eminence. JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI has never related its performance to him, but the Foreign Ministry is always trying to depict its own performance as faultless and itself as one and the same as the ruling system, and whenever it encounters any difficulties, protests, or criticism, it portrays itself as always acting in accordance with the leader's views. If that is so — which it is not — then what is the role of the Foreign Ministry? Moreover, the role of the Foreign Ministry's expert studies in the formation of the ruling system's decisions must not be overlooked. A case in point is that of Galindo Pohl. We will not go into that and dozens of other similar examples, but will remind the Foreign Ministry to approach the issues more realistically, not to neglect the judgement of our intelligent people, and not to consider the fair and free-thinking criticism by the press as a kind of revolutionary cover for anti-value issues by playing with words. If the paper considers some — not all — of the Foreign Ministry measures to be demagoguery, that is a reality and the present reply is clear evidence of that. This action is not following the ruling system but ascribing one's own tendencies to the system.

4. Concerning relations with Egypt, the paper basically believes that the Egyptian regime's performance in recent weeks has proved precisely the opposite of the Foreign Ministry's standpoint. By convening an Arab summit in Cairo and hosting Netanyahu, Husni Mubarak in fact tried to increase his reliance on Zionism. The failure by the Foreign Ministry to understand this obvious reality is either due to a lack of proper analysis of Middle East events or a double standard in words and deeds. The Foreign Ministry's infuriation over JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI's open statement of that reality is a weakness whose roots must be sought within the ministry itself.

5. Regarding Mubarak's refusal to invite Saddam Husayn to the Arab League summit in Cairo, we draw the attention of the Foreign Ministry to this subtle point. That move demonstrated that such an approach is the international norm. Therefore, our Foreign Ministry can also refuse to invite al-Faluji, 'Arafat, and Mubarak to the meetings of the OIC.

6. The fact that JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI's representative attends the meetings referred to by the Foreign Ministry less frequently is because, at those meetings, attention is mostly paid to the Foreign Ministry's performance, no usable issues are raised in them, and the Foreign Ministry's approach to some current foreign policy issues is, in most cases, far from realistic.

7. We consider it necessary to stress that there are intelligent individuals within the Foreign Ministry who have a realistic analysis of issues. JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI believes that if these people are given more opportunity to carry out analysis and expert studies, and more attention is paid to their views, the ministry's present weaknesses will be eliminated.

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8. If the Foreign Ministry becomes so infuriated over an approach that does not stand on ceremony and is critical that it only considers pleasantries as respectful and proper journalism, then that becomes another weapon. That is because no newspaper will have the right to say anything to the Foreign Ministry but nice words. Of course, if the Foreign Ministry does not already realize it, it had better understand that JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI does not stand on ceremony and will never do so. This is friendship in the paper's view, not the other.

[Signed] The Editorial Board of JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI

Iran: Editorial Discusses 'Defensive or Offensive' Foreign Policy

NC2307064896 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 13 Jul 96 pp 1, 16

[Editorial: "Foreign Policy: Defensive or Offensive?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A key issue in our foreign policy is finding an answer to an ideological-political question that is among the most important topics of the day; only when Iranian foreign policy officials answer this question can they make correct decisions and avoid falling into traps.

The question is: In confronting the major enemy of the revolution — America, the Zionist regime, and their satellites — is a defensive or an offensive policy the best?

The answer can be viewed from two angles — the basic and the practical. Basically, and from the point of what is right, Man never allows himself to be the target of an offensive. A defensive move is adopted by people who want only to safeguard their own lives. Such people naturally lack a feeling of responsibility toward others and, apart from thinking of ways to save themselves, do not adhere to any principles, norms, and criteria that might cause the world's bullies any problems. If a country follows such a line, it will adopt a defensive policy only when its borders are attacked by the enemy. The same may apply to politics or trade, in which case countries that adopt a defensive policy will seek only to defend their political and economic interests.

But this does not apply to countries and nations that have dreams and are faithful to principles and norms that go beyond their own borders. In the same way that they rise up when there is aggression against their geographic borders and their national interests these nations rise up when their principles and their aspirations, extending beyond their borders to every corner of the world, come under aggression and attack by the enemy. This is one of the directives of the dear prophet of Islam, who said that anyone who does not care for Muslims is not a Muslim.

On the practical side, in addition to the clear history of the political life of the dear prophet of Islam and of the other imams, in our era too the uprising of His Eminence Imam Khomeyni and the Islamic movement, which led to the uprooting of the despotic monarchy, is clear proof of the need for an offensive policy toward the enemies. The Islamic Revolution won on the basis of an offensive policy; it was on the basis of this policy that it forced the superpowers onto their knees.

In view of this clear reality the Islamic Republic's foreign policy officials can win over America, the Zionist regime, and their satellites only by constantly relying on an offensive policy. Our Foreign Ministry officials' action during the past few weeks in relation with establishing political relations with Egypt has not been based on this policy. The harm inflicted on us from this direction is the outcome of this attitude. [previous sentence as published] Safeguarding the grandeur of the Islamic Republic's system dictates that our foreign policy officials are alert in confronting the enemies of the revolution and that they never deviate from an offensive policy.

Iran: Editorial Calls For End to 'Foreign Powers' in Region

LD2507143096 Tehran IRNA in English 0716 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, July 25, IRNA — The English daily 'TEHRAN TIMES' in its editorial on Thursday [25 July] emphasizing that peace and security are essential for development, urged regional countries to rely on themselves to ensure peace and tranquility in the region.

The daily added, "after the collapse of the monarchy the U.S. and some European countries, through massive propaganda, then tried to project Iran as a threat to the security of the region."

It is obvious that after the culmination of the Islamic revolution in 1979, Iran's military expenditure has been one of the lowest in the region, a fact that proves that Tehran will not be involved in any expansionist scheme in the region, the paper pointed out.

TEHRAN TIMES added that Iran as the most influential country in the region has demonstrated time and again its goodwill towards other countries by way of offering cooperation and the focal point of Iran's foreign policy is that regional security can best be achieved if it is left merely in the hands of regional states.

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"Iran invites its neighbors to test its sincerity and put an end to any excuse for allowing foreign powers to be in the region," concluded the editorial.

Iran: Paper Calls for 'Independent' Policies in Persian Gulf

LD2507143296 Tehran IRNA in English 0750 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, July 25, IRNA — The English daily 'IRAN NEWS' said Thursday [25 July] that if the littoral states of the Persian Gulf base their diplomacy on mutual understanding of national and regional interests, the region can become peaceful to all countries bordering it.

Commenting on the visit to Tehran of Qatari foreign minister Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jabr Al Thani, the editorial added "Iran-Qatar relations can serve as an apt role model for other Persian Gulf littoral states which could then embark upon detente and betterment of ties with the Islamic Republic."

The paper said among Iran's southern neighbors, Qatar and Oman have proven that they can independently formulate and regulate their relations with Iran without being influenced by Saudi Arabian or U.S. policies.

"The adoption of a realistic and independent policy is of paramount importance for all Persian gulf littoral states," it said.

The paper deplored that Iran's southern neighbors have at times displayed contradictory behaviors in their bilateral relations with Tehran.

The contradiction arises when the countries gather together at the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council where they seem to adopt "a collectively illogical and hostile defensive stance against Iran," concluded the editorial.

Iran: Editorial Stresses Need To Boost Regional Trade

NC2607075996 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 17 Jul 96 p 2

[Editorial: "Regional Cooperation, Antidote to Trade Blackmail"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Turkmen President, Sapar Murat Niyazov, is back for another official visit to the Islamic Republic.

Since Turkmenistan gained independence in 1992, Presidents Niyazov and Hashemi-Rafsanjani have met for 14 times. The two presidents have personally signed 16 protocols out of the 105 thus far concluded between Tehran and Ashkhabad. The number of agreements concluded between the two countries is proof of a strong political will and determination to cement ties.

The same holds true for other Central Asian and Caucasian republics, whose relations with Iran are no less intimate.

Unfortunately, despite the potential for mutually rewarding relations, rhetorics have had an upper hand where practicality would have been desirable. Memorandums of understanding are now gathering dust because the strong political will has not been matched by a will to get economic projects implemented.

The same fate holds true for other Third World countries. The eagerness of their leaders to confer and talk with their counterparts in other countries has become monotonous to the ear. Ideas and dreams die just as fast as they are aired. In developed countries the willingness to talk is matched by a determination to work.

To be more concrete, let us consider the level of trade between Iran and Turkmenistan. Statistics show that the volume of trade between the two is not quite satisfactory. At $50 million annually, the volume of trade is "peanuts" compared with each country's trade volume with most Western countries.

While it is true that countries in the West may have a bigger market, the trend is not satisfactory for neighboring countries with common aspirations and having access to each other's raw materials.

Perhaps the problem lies in the lack of information about each other's markets and the possibilities for development of potentials that lie open for Iran and Turkmenistan. The recent inauguration of the Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan railway only proves that much can be realized if only the countries in the region cooperate more fully by availing of each other's goods and services.

The same holds true for Iran's trade with the rest of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). What is needed is a realization that strong bilateral and multilateral trade ties will serve our interests better because we are nearer each other — in goals and aspirations.

Indeed, a dynamic cooperation among the countries of the region can work as a counterbalance to any attempts of the big powers at using trade to blackmail the regional countries into catering to their wishes.

The WTO is a good example to illustrate our point. Almost none of the CIS countries is a member of the WTO. Why join the WTO in the first place? The regional countries should first build up their own

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regional economic groupings and, when such economic groupings become strong enough, then they can join the WTO on their own terms instead of just acquiescing in any conditions imposed by the WTO.

In regional cooperation there is strength. Strength is the citadel against the bullying of big powers. Rhetorics are not enough. What the Third World desperately needs now is action in the form of bilateral or multilateral cooperation.

Iran: Rafsanjani Stresses Importance of Friday Prayers

LD2507163896 Tehran IRNA in English 1128 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, July 25, IRNA — President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani said here Thursday [25 July] that Friday prayer congregations held nationwide every Friday has served to cement, strengthen and consolidate the revolution and the Islamic system. President Rafsanjani told visiting members of the Friday prayers headquarters that revival of this divine duty was one of the important achievements of Iran's Islamic revolution. Underlining the role of Friday prayers in raising the awareness of the public about the everyday's issues, President Rafsanjani said that Friday prayer leaders by raising the latest problems facing the Muslim world should foil hostile propaganda of the enemies and their lackeys inside the country. Meanwhile, head of the Friday prayers headquarters Maqsudi said that Friday prayers have been held in Iran 882 times over the past 17 years; 210 of which being led by leader of Islamic revolution Ayatollah Seyed 'Ali Khamene'i and 257 by President Rafsanjani.

Iran: Anti-Inflationary Measures Discussed

96LA0303D Tehran RESALAT in Persian 12 May 96 p 15

[FBIS Translated Text] Tehran, IRNA—The Sixth Congress on National Monetary and Foreign Exchange Policy will be held beginning Tuesday [14 May] at the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran, to study how to preserve the value of monetary assets in the face of inflation.

At a press conference yesterday, Dr. Hasan Golriz, chief of the Monetary and Banking Research Institute, stated the above and said: At the Sixth Congress on National Monetary and Foreign Exchange Policy, unlike previous years when various issues were studied, only the topic of how to preserve the value of monetary assets in the face of inflation is to be studied. At the end of the congress, a roundtable will also be held to assemble the issues raised during the congress.

Iran: Guardian Council Reelects Executive Committee Members

LD2407121396 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Guardian Council met today and discussed the bill to amend the law on the administration of the Islamic Republic of Iran's free trade and industrial zones, which was returned after amendments to the Guardian Council by the Majles. The council, however, announced that one of its objections [to the original bill] had not been changed.

Today's session also voted for the election of the executive committee [hey'at-e ra'iseh] of the Guardian Council. The result of the votes was the unanimous reelection of the following to their respective posts: Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati as secretary; Ayatollah Mohammad Emami-Kashani as spokesman, and Ahmad Alizadeh as acting secretary of the Guardian Council.

Iran: Daily Speculates on Prospective Presidential Candidates

NC2607040096 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 18 Jul 96 p 2

[Unattributed commentary: "Who Will Be the Next Iranian President?"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran — Although there is still one more year to go until the next presidential election, the question of who will be the next Iranian president is already at issue in different political circles and is gradually finding its way to the press.

The various political factions and groups are each trying to nominate a popular candidate and convince those with favorable political background to run for the presidency.

As the Constitution of the Islamic Republic allows the president to run for the office only twice, with president Hashemi-Rafsanjani's leaving office, a close and serious competition is predicted in the next presidential election.

It is clear that those backing Jameh-ye Rowhaniyat-e Mobarez (JRM), which won the most parliamentary seats in the Fifth Majles, will definitely vote for the Parliament Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri as the next president.

Nevertheless, it hangs in the balance who will be the next Majles speaker if Nateq-Nuri is elected president. It is foreseen his successor should be the one who enjoys the support of both dominant parliamentary factions. Thus, Majles Vice-Speaker and the Secretary

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of Supreme Council for National Security, Hojjat ol-Eslam Hasan Rowhani, is the only candidate who seems likely to fill the vacant position.

Undoubtedly the opposition faction, Majma'e Rowhaniyun-e Mobarez (MRM), will also nominate a presidential candidate since securing 90 parliamentary seats in the Fifth Majles will definitely prompt it to seek further clout with the government.

Consequently, it seems most probable that the MRM, which suspended all its political activities following its crushing defeat in the Fourth Majles elections, will embark on reorganizing its forces and make a fresh appearance on the political scene of the country.

The MRM's first nominee for the presidency is likely to be Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali Akbar Mohtashami, who was Interior Minister under the former Prime Minister, Mirhoseyn Musavi. Mohtashami, however, does not enjoy a great deal of popular support.

It is also predicted that the MRM will try to persuade Mirhoseyn Musavi to run for president in the next elections, but so far there has been no news confirming his willingness to do so.

Following the amendment to the Constitution and elimination of premiership, Musavi resigned from all executive tasks and, in the past few years, has been off the political scene and only engaged in scientific work at the universities.

Another potential candidate who may run for the presidency is the former government spokesman Ahmad Tavakkoli, who emerged as a strong competitor against President Hashemi-Rafsanjani in the last presidential election. Despite not being supported by any political groups, he managed to poll over four million votes, which was contrary to all predictions.

Tavakkoli, who is currently studying for a PhD degree in economics, has not announced yet whether he intends to run in the next presidential election.

The Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati and the Secretary-General of the Society for Defending Islamic Values Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohammadi Reyshahri are also among the probable presidential candidates. Velayati, however, has denied his candidacy, expressing his support for Nateq-Nuri.

Thus far, the odds are mostly in favor of Hojjat ol-Eslam Nateq Nuri. But, in view of the large number of candidates and dispersion of the votes, the likelihood of a runoff election cannot be totally rule out.

Iran: Montazeri Remains Politically Active

96LA0279L London KEYHAN in Persian 23 May 96 p 12

[FBIS Translated Text] Ayatollah Hoseyn 'Ali Montazeri, who had not displayed any sign of political life for quite some time, has apparently not given up struggle, so that those involved in politics regard the voiding of the elections in Esfahan and more importantly the elections in Najafabad to be the effects of his political presence. Informed sources say that the threats and flatteries of the agents of the regime have not been able to shut Montazeri's mouth, and this has caused his supporters to display more daring and courage.

Also, it is worthy of note that recently his dissertation, "Explanations of Problems," with "new terms" has been published in Qom, and interestingly the Ministry of Islamic Guidance has included it on a list of new or reprinted books it publishes for the public every month. Montazeri's dissertation, which is sold for 250 tumans, is in its eighth printing and has so far sold more than 50,000 copies.

Iran: Karrubi on Elections, Fifth Majles

96LA0274G Tehran SALAM in Persian 17 Apr 96 p 17

[Interview with Hojjat ol-Eslam Karrubi, member of the Majma'-e Ruhaniyyun-e Mobarez, Militant Clerics Society, by SALAM; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Boxed item] **Note—Continuing the interviews of the political service of SALAM with experts regarding the elections of the Fifth Majles, in this issue, the statements of Hojjat ol-Eslam Karrubi, a distinguished member of the Majma'-e Ruhaniyyun-e Mobarez [Militant Clerics Society], are presented to the revered readers.** [end boxed item]

[SALAM] What is your opinion of the people's participation in the Fifth Majles elections?

[Karrubi] The primary phase of the elections, which was completed, had both very important positive points and, in my opinion, also weak, blind, and ambiguous points. Of the positive points, one was the widespread, good, desirable, appropriate, and dignified presence of the people. We must sincerely thank the people who pay attention to their position in the Constitution and understand the situation of the country and the eyes of the friends and enemies who are watching the votes and the position of the people. When it was said that they understand their position, it is because the collateral of the regime of the Islamic Republic is the people and their votes, and the presence of the people guarantees

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the future of the regime. The presence of the people is loyalty to the blood of the martyrs and the ideals. Hence, they have not been indifferent and have participated. Naturally, the enemies are waiting to see what the situation will be and how people will react. Friends also become happy with such participation. The Islamic revolution naturally has supporters abroad. Hence, the news of the Islamic revolution will receive different reactions throughout the world.

As an insignificant servant, here again, I recommend to the people to have a more active role in the second phase of the elections. They may have complaints and have criticism of some reactions, such as the voiding, the rejection of qualifications, the economic problems, and the rise in the price of some items and goods. Even though these complaints and criticisms are proper and correct, they should not stop their participation. Rather, they should be the cause of more active participation. The way to solve and cure these complaints is to take part in the elections.

If a person is sick and goes to the doctor but the doctor does not treat him well, this does not mean that the patient should not go to a doctor again. Here, failure to do so is to the detriment of the patient. By not participating, no problems will certainly be solved, and certainly another problem will be added to the problems. Going to the ballot boxes will eliminate the deficiencies, shortcomings, and weaknesses, even if relatively. With our extensive presence, we must elect the person we think is the best, who looks at the issues with his own standards and criteria, so that this person can go and eliminate the shortcomings.

Indeed, all the media is active in encouraging the people to actively participate in the elections. In particular, SALAM newspaper has been more active in this regard.

Moreover, we must not forget the imam's last will and testament in which he emphasized participation and elections. Also, this active participation of the people in the election is the source of hope to the servants of the regime and the motivated and responsible forces in the regime. The friends of the revolution in various parts of the world also are awaiting the expansive presence of the people in the elections. Such frequent presence in such sciences are like the thorn in the eyes of the enemies of this country.

Again, as a very small servant, I would like to ask the people that with the understanding they have of the situation of the country domestically and abroad and considering their understanding of the situation of the legislature, if they want a stronger and more dynamic Majles, they must have active participation in the elections and also encourage others to participate in the elections.

The second positive point is the variety of candidates and in terms of number, their large number of candidates. These are among the points of strength of the elections, and naturally a great part of the good participation of the people is the result of this phenomenon, and this has caused the people to be happy because there has been room for the maneuvering of the people, even if relatively. Certainly, if the number of candidates were higher, I believe that the people's participation would even exceed this level.

Among the points of strength of these elections, both when I was present on the scene and witnessed and also with the reports I received, was the people's searching, asking, and consulting with one another, choosing individuals from among various lists. In my opinion, these are among the very positive and hopeful points of these elections.

[SALAM] What do you consider to be the general climate of the elections and possibly their positive and weak points?

[Karrubi] Regarding the ambiguous and undesirable points of the elections, I must point out the continuing problem of rejecting qualifications. As far as I know, of those who were rejected earlier (for the Fourth Majles) because they were all officially notified to come and register, a large number of these people registered, but as far as I could find, the number of people whose qualifications were approved was very small. Among a few Majles deputies, those who registered and whose qualifications had been rejected before, out of those who registered this time, only three were rejected. In addition to them, a new group was added to this group, which was a group whose qualifications were rejected, even a group of people whose qualifications had been approved in the Fourth Majles, and some had been Majles deputies for two or three terms. Among them, we even see faces who had a position and place in the early revolution under those special conditions and also were appointed as experts to write the Constitution from large provinces who played an important role. The qualifications of these were also rejected. On the whole, the qualifications of new faces from inside and outside the Majles with extensive histories and activities and judicial positions, some of whom are learned, spiritual, and educated figures and at the present are in sensitive judiciary positions, have been rejected, and this creates doubt and suspicion.

This issue of rejecting qualifications was one of our complaints from before, which unfortunately remained the same, but these gentlemen have apparently learned

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what to do. They reject a large number of people, then they return a portion of them and approve their qualifications and say that the situation has improved. This is apparently a new method. As the saying goes, "You tell someone that he is dead so he will be content to have a fever."

Our positions regarding these issues are the same as four years ago, and our positions and understanding of the law are as we said before.

This problem (of rejection of qualifications) will have an effect on the people. People do not wish the deputies who have been in the Majles several times and who have worked hard for them and whom they like to be so easily dismissed from the scene. For this reason, it is heard in some places that the people have reacted. For example, they have asked the people to vote for those that they announce or have put votes in the ballot boxes in the names of the same gentlemen whose qualifications were rejected.

The next point was the issue of the voiding of elections. Of course, regarding the voiding, I cannot judge decisively because I do not know the reasons for them. I believe that they should tell the people the reasons for the voiding so that the people are informed whether or not the evidence and reasons are strong and proven. Hence, I too have a complaint regarding the voiding and feel that these problems will have a negative effect on the people. We must value the votes of the people and respect them. In fact, the officials must in some instances do so in order that the reasons be proven and have religious justification, because they want to cancel the vote of the people and then may have consequences which they must accept. Hence, I do not make a judgment here because I do not know the matter precisely. I hope that they take the utmost care so that such problems would not occur in the next phase.

[SALAM] Recently, opinions have been expressed regarding the change of the election law. What is Your Honor's view in this regard?

[Karrubi] The third point that creates questions for me, and I hope a member of the Council of Guardians will answer it, not to me, but in order to clarify the issue of those who have such a question in mind, is the position of some of the members of the Council of Guardians after the elections in regards to reforming the election law. Of course, certain issues come to mind and to other people's minds, but it is proper for them to explain why this issue was raised and what problems have existed to make this decision.

Here, I need to explain that from the time that this action (rejection of qualifications) began five or six years ago and the time when they interpreted from the Constitution that they have such a right, and it was sent to me a year prior to the elections while I was the speaker of the Majles, I did not agree with it as an idea, and I do not agree with it now. At that time, we took a series of steps in this connection, when the events of the Fourth Majles occurred. First, we examined the election law in the presence of the people and several times in the presence of some of the officials. The minister of interior at the time was Mr. Nuri, who insisted on the issue that was clear to him and that was his understanding of the law. I pursued the matter until I was invited to the seminar of Friday imams. I told the brother who had come to invite me that if I come, I have something to say, which I will. He said that there was no problem. Hence, I gave explanations regarding the election law and said that what we had in mind was to have this law implemented; these gentlemen agreed, and there were no arguments about shortcomings and problems.

In the Fourth Majles, about five or six months ago, the election law was amended. They included what we had at the time in the law, which is the issue of approbation and in the form that they wished and understood, they included it in the law in a way that even newspapers criticized it. Finally, they brought this law, amended it, and included approbation, as well.

From my perspective, the relations of the Majles and the Council of Guardians in the Fourth Majles have been exceptional. Because I do not want to enter that discussion and the arguments that will ensue, the relations of the Majles and the Council of Guardians in the Fourth Majles have been very good, and I admire these good relations. In any event, a law has been written, and there was no tension. Now, this law has been written, the elections were done immediately, and there has been no talk of amending the law or at least I have not heard it anywhere. When the elections were completed, they suddenly said, please amend this law. Well, here this question is raised for the people: How was it that they amended the law five or six months ago and now there is again talk of amending it? Well, this understanding will occur that approbation has not met the problem. This is what everyone may understand. In my opinion, this is not a desirable thing and leaves room for complaints. If the amendment on approbation has not done what they wanted, we should examine the issue of what the reason is, why it was not corrected, and what its roots are in a different way. It is not at all possible in the hasty manner that they are proposing. On 2 Ordibehesht [21 April], the Majles will resume. On 6 Khordad [26 May], the Majles ends. Everyone knows that in the last days of the Majles, the efficiency of the Majles is relatively low. Can a law be harmed so much

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and so hastily? Why did they create this problem? In other words, they feel that there are good issues, and the next Majles will not accept them. In my opinion, there are things that they hear, read, and record. These will remain and must be thought about carefully. We must not think in a closed and limited environment of a particular situation. We must think that there is a tomorrow after today. Others will come. What will they say if they see it? They will say, why did you not say in those sessions to amend it, you who compromised in any way you wanted?

The honorable spokesman of the committee at the time it was being amended and when there was the discussion about approbation, which some criticized, said in an interview that they had talked to the Council of Guardians and everyone had agreed, etc. Now why should they say such a thing about something that was agreed to? This is not an acceptable matter to society.

[SALAM] What is Your Honor's recommendation for improving the elections?

[Karrubi] The last point I want to say to friends who are involved in the elections is: The second phase of the elections will, God willing, be carried out in the election in these districts whose elections were voided on time. As a small brother, I have a recommendation for all those involved, including those in oversight, implementation, and higher levels, those who are at the ballot boxes in the cities, those who count the votes, those who are sent to the villages and are involved in the operations of the elections, I recommend to them, oh brothers and sisters: "Do not exchange your next world for this world of others."

In the elections, you must be the keepers of trust. Give the votes of the people that belong to a person to that person, and on the basis of our views we should not be the custodians of others. If we are very interested in the clergy, for example, to say it is better to vote for this cleric because it is better for Islam; if we think that one person who is an expert is better and say that to vote for him is better and not to vote for that cleric who is not useful; and if in the same way, providing a line for individuals is not proper by any means; then we must let the people decide themselves and we must not open the door to such justification to ourselves. We must not say that one supports the downtrodden and the other does not; that one is very religious and the other is not; that we come and say vote for one and not vote for the other; or that we interfere in this way.

For instance, when one villager says one name and we write the name of someone else, this is certainly sinning, and we will be indebted to all the people. Be sure that such justifications are not religious obligations. There are justifications for the self. Such issues open a door to a person to gradually commit other acts.

Here I will relate a story for you to become aware of such problems. In 1362 [21 March 1983-20 March 1984], I was sent to Europe to attend to the affairs of those injured in chemical warfare. I traveled abroad. There, I met with certain people who had visited the imam in France while he was there. Some were students who had studied in the United States. They said that at that time they told the imam that when in the United States, they would use public telephones and do something so that the coin would come back to them and then complete the call. They said that this would not be problematic in terms of religious law, because the United States is a world devourer and the manifestation of imperialism, etc. The imam said to them, "I will not discuss the issue of whether or not this is a problem. I forbid you to do such things. Do not get yourself accustomed to such actions, because once you get used to it, gradually you will justify other violations as well."

What I mean by all this is this educational and moral point of the imam, an imam who besides being a leader and revolutionary was a teacher of ethics. Hence, what I have said goes back to what the imam said, that we should not justify our violations and deceive ourselves with such ideas. Hence, I recommend to those involved in the elections to be true keepers of trust, respect the vote of the people, and gain the confidence of the people for the Islamic Republic and the officials more than ever before.

[SALAM] Regarding the issue of publicity, if Your Honor has a comparison with the previous terms, please tell us. The political factions that are now involved in advertisements sometimes are worried about the advertisements of the opposite party. What is your opinion in this regard?

[Karrubi] There has been more advertisement in this term. The cost of advertisements have also been more and may have had a bad effect on the people and with the problems that they have, such advertisement might not be pleasant to them. This also has roots, and we must see why this problem exists. We must sense danger because of this problem and think of a solution for it. Posters and placards and similar advertisements are acceptable, but what is quoted in newspapers—like giving dinners, lunches, money, and the like—is very worrisome, and gradually money may decide the elections. As we must find the roots and see which individuals resort to such issues, we must see what we can do to eliminate these problems. What these gentlemen say is not the correct way. I am astonished. When I see the reactions, I am very astonished. As the

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imam said: "We do not live in caves; we are living in this world." We now have 19 million precollegiate students, and in five years (for the next term), we will have 25 million students.

We must feel that in the next four years our problem will be more than now. We must be after a good solution, rather than offer solutions that cause despair, or, for example, for them to come and speak and deposit collateral. This is simple-mindedness and shows ignorance of the issues.

In any case, God willing and with the help of God, we should be all ready to go to the ballot boxes on Friday and vote for the candidate of our choice. God willing, the people will be more enthusiastic in the second phase of the elections, and the Fifth Majles will be found in a good manner, and with the help of God the deputies in this term will be able to serve the people.

[SALAM] What is Your Honor's opinion regarding the recent aggression of the Zionist regime against South Lebanon?

[Karrubi] This is a great crime. This is a great injustice. In other words, they so violently and mercilessly attack a nation in their homes from land and air and massacre them. The offense is that the enemy is in their land and has occupied it, and they are fighting to free their country.

Can any logic accept the enemy being on someone's land and not fighting him? Could this happen anywhere in the world, that a country is invaded but the invader is not fought? We have all read history. We all praise a country that fights to drive the enemy out of its land. Now, this has happened for Lebanon, and it has risen to fight the invader. We see that the Zionists attack them in this tragic manner and massacre their women and children with the support of the world-devouring United States, but the whole world is sitting by and only watching these crimes, while they continue their crimes, enjoying their support. Regarding me personally, as a servant, I was involved with this issue, by the blessings of the Islamic Republic, at the time that I worked at the Shahid [Martyrs] Foundation in regards to this issue of the martyrs in Palestine and Lebanon. Later, too, revolutionary institutions such as the Red Crescent, the Emergency Committee, and the Martyrs Foundation engaged in the revolutionary and humanitarian work that was their duty there, and especially in regards to the affairs of the people, these institutions assisted, and in the Majles, too, in connection with this issue, we had a ratification and a budget that continues now.

This is a pressure on the people of Lebanon, all the Muslims, and the people of Iran; it is a pressure on the Hezbollah, a pressure on Syria, and ultimately a pressure on all the countries that are sensitive to the fate of the people of Palestine, especially in connection with the imposed peace plan, which completely eliminates the rights of the Palestinians people. This peace is a peace in which the owner of the house has no rights and the aggressor has all the rights. These pressures are all to make that peace plan adhere.

In this connection, the Islamic nation has many resources that unfortunately are not utilized. The people of Lebanon and Palestine must be given financial and material help, with which the people of Palestine and Lebanon can drive the enemy out of their land and put up resistance against it, which must be given by the Islamic world. With political action, such as forces of other Islamic countries putting pressure on the Zionists, the people of Lebanon and Palestine can be helped. Economically, Muslim countries have great oil resources on which others are dependent. As soon as they feel that the oil-rich Muslim countries are serious and may refuse to buy their exported goods, this will have a tremendous effect, since they know that mere condemnations are empty slogans.

We have many resources and tools to be able to help the people of Palestine. Another way to help the people of Palestine and Lebanon is the unity of intention of the Islamic governments. Israel expands, because this unity of Islamic governments does not exist. The existence of communication, revoking of embargoes, trends between our neighbors and Israel all are examples of the lack of unity among Islamic countries.

If everyone follows the policy that the imam gave to Muslims, would the situation be as it is now? Could the people of Palestine, who have lost everything, be called terrorists? While every being must defend itself, should the Palestinians not defend themselves?

Then, if attention were put to the directives and advice of the Imam, certainly this would not be the situation of Muslims. Even other countries have the same opinion, that if Muslims had united, the United States would never sacrifice its interests or endanger itself for the sake of Israel, and Israel would certainly retreat. But now that Israel sees the situation as it is (no unity exists among Islamic countries), it puts pressure on the people of Lebanon, and their cries for justice will not get anywhere, and even the United Nations that defends human rights remains silent with regard to these crimes.

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Iran: Alviri on Questions on Fifth Majles

96LA0274E Tehran SALAM in Persian 16 Apr 96 p 14

[Interview with Engineer Alviri, candidate for the Fifth Majles, by SALAM; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Boxed item] **Note—Continuing the interviews of the Political Service of SALAM with the experts regarding the Fifth Majles elections, in this issue, we present the statements of Engineer Alviri, a Fifth Majles candidate who has entered the second phase of the elections, to the readers..** [end boxed item]

[SALAM] Participation has increased in these elections. What do you consider the reason?

[Alviri] The people's participation in the elections, which had gradually decreased since the first term, began to increase for the first time in this term. I consider the most important reason for this change to be the position of the grand leader in encouraging all strata and groups of people to participate in the elections. The emphasis of his honor to the executive and oversight committees and the Council of Guardians regarding not omitting candidates for baseless excuses caused many of the individuals who intended to become candidates up to the final days to decide to register. For this reason, the number of candidates increased to more than double that of the previous term, and naturally people felt that to a great extent they had their candidates among the total number of candidates.

[SALAM] What is your evaluation regarding the initial results of the elections? The Kargozaran group and the Jame'eh-ye Ruhaniyyat [Militant Clergy Association] each consider themselves somehow to be the winners of the primary phase. What is your opinion?

[Alviri] I do not know many of the candidates who received votes in the primary phase, but at the limited degree to which I know them, I can say that the number of candidates affiliated with each of the groups of the Kargozaran and the Militant Clergy Association that have entered the Majles does not reach 30 percent. This means that about half of those elected are not affiliated with either faction. To judge this more clearly, we must wait for the second phase.

[SALAM] Regarding the modification policy and the process of its implementation in 1374 [21 March 1995-20 March 1996], we have seen half or more state the failure of this policy. As a person who once probably thought differently regarding economic issues but accepted the modification policy, what is your opinion?

[Alviri] I admit that the government in 1374 changed its modification policy. Some of these new policies were a return to the First Development Plan and some an escape from it.

For example, reforming the distribution system was anticipated in the First Plan, and according to Note 37 of the plan law, the Economic Council was presented as responsible for determining the permitted distribution networks on the two levels of wholesale and retail in a way that the circulation of goods on each level is done only by one, or the system of rationing of necessary goods is continued until the end of the plan, and the like. The government did not implement the policies ratified in the First Plan regarding distribution, and the policies of 1374 are to some extent a return to the same policy of the First Plan.

But a part of the policies made in 1374, in addition to being a deviation from the modification policy, is also a deviation from the First Plan. For example, the increase in the balanced rate of foreign currency was one of the policies of the First Developmental Plan, which the government implemented more rapidly than was projected. Suddenly in 1374, under the Majles pressure, the government abandoned the policy of the managed floating foreign currency and pursued the three-rate foreign currency system. This was also a deviation from the modification policy and also a deviation from the First Plan.

[SALAM] Do you think that the modification policy will solve the problem of the national economy? Do you consider the modification policy and its implementation to be separate issues, if the policies that were implemented for several years were other than what you had in mind?

[Alviri] I have always defended the policies of the First Plan and not the modification policy. Unfortunately, many think that the modification policies are the same as those of the First Plan, but this is not true. For example, in the modification policy, there is no place for the consumer model, whereas both in the goals of the First Plan and in Note 30, and also in the policies of the First Plan, there is great emphasis on reforming the consumer model. Large volumes of exports of many goods are compatible with the modification policy but incompatible with the policies of the consumer model of the First Plan.

Of course, some parts of the modification policy were included in the First Plan, such as the modification of manpower and prevention of the increase in the body of the government, modification of government companies, and modification of the price of general goods and services, in a way that the acceptable expenditures

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for new and current investments of the producing companies are provided.

I defend that part of the modification policies that was in the First Plan, hence, I am not of the same opinion with those who question the whole notion of the modification policy.

The First Plan is "open" in the area of production and exports and it is controlled and "closed" in the area of distribution, consumption, and imports. The open economy that I am speaking of is the same policy that was ratified by the Third Majles in the First Plan law. We must pave the way for production and exports and remove any sort of restriction in this connection. On the other hand, by devising a consumer model, we must lower the share of consumption in the gross domestic product and, by reforming the distribution system, prevent the profitability of this economic sector in order for investments to move toward production, and also the speed of money circulation will be decreased.

Regarding the cultural sector, I must say that the free zones are no different than other parts of the country. There too, like other parts of the country, alcoholic beverages are prohibited, veiling is obligatory, and the like. Of course, because of the kind of travelers, the situation of veiling in Kish must be compared to places like Mohseni Square and Vali-ye 'Asr Square in Tehran, and not with Qom and the Shrine of 'Abdol'azim.

Considering the characteristics of the free zones and the traffic of foreigners, we are devising bylaws that will be presented to the grand leader after ratification by the Supreme Council of Free Zones in order to make the framework of the cultural activities in the free zones more clear for the related officials. Regarding the economic issues, I must say that within the past two or three years, great changes have occurred in the free zones. Until 1372 [21 March 1993-20 March 1994], the free zones were merely places for the entry of luxury and unnecessary goods.

Now, these imports have been reduced to one-third, and, on the other hand, you see hundreds of companies in production. In 1372, only 50 permits for investments in the free zones were issued, whereas in 1374 it reached 1,324 cases.

Production, investment, employment, and non-oil exports are our goals in the free zones, and I believe in them and consider them beneficial for the national economy. On the other hand, I regard imports to the free zones, especially of non-essential and luxury items, to be harmful, but this is a ratification of the Majles and cannot be prevented. By creating attractions in production activities on the one hand, and raising port taxes on the other, we could reduce the inclination toward imports.

[SALAM] What are your most important goals if you are elected to the Majles?

[Alviri] Even though I am an electrical engineer, I have been continuously involved with economic issues and planning for about 18 years. While I regard political activities in the Majles to be beneficial, I think that the good of the people is in my experiences and scientific and specialized knowledge to solve the economic problems. The economic issues that I will pursue are:

1. Control of inflation and high prices: The factors that create inflation and high prices are quite known to me, and I think that by ratifying appropriate policies and employing those factors, within two years the inflation of 60 percent can be reduced to about 5 to 7 percent.

2. Create jobs: The unemployment crisis threatens today's and the future society. Alongside it, the low rate of utilization of resources raises the costs, decreases the purchasing power of the people, and also reduces the competition ability in the international markets. I believe that the Majles, by mobilizing the resources and engaging in job-creating investments, can fight this problem and reduce the rate of unemployment to a great extent.

3. Develop non-oil exports: The life of our country at the beginning of the 21st century depends on non-oil exports. The Majles must, by devising comprehensive laws and implementing necessary amendments in the existing laws, remove the restrictions and obstacles to exports. The gradual increase of non-oil exports can never eliminate the great danger that our country will confront in the future. For non-oil exports, we need a "great leap." This, in my opinion, can be done, and if I am elected to the Fifth Majles, I will feel obliged to do it.

[SALAM] What is your opinion regarding foreign policy?

[Alviri] The direction of the Islamic Republic must be toward establishing relations with all countries, except with those that have particular problems.

For example, relations with Israel are out of the question because we do not recognize its existence. Relations with the United States are out of the question because not only is that country not ashamed of its old hostility, but in all international assemblies and circles, it reacts to the Islamic Republic as if it is owed something. Relations with the United States can be studied when the nature of U.S. foreign policy regarding relations with Iran changes.

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Iran: Nuri on Make-Up of Fifth Majles

96LA0274B Tehran SALAM in Persian 15 Apr 96 p 9

[Interview with Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Abdollah Nuri, a candidate of the Fifth Majles from the Coalition of the Imam's Line forces, by unidentified SALAM correspondent; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Begin box] **Note — In continuing the interviews of the Political Service of SALAM with experts regarding the Fifth Majles elections, in this issue, the statements of Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Abdollah Nuri, a candidate of the Fifth Majles from the Coalition of the Imam's Line forces, who has reached the second round of the elections, will be presented to the honorable readers.** [End box]

[SALAM] After leaving your position at the Ministry of Interior, Your Excellency went to Qom and in fact avoided all politics. Why did you enter politics? If you do not receive votes, will you go back to Qom?

[Nuri] In connection with the question that you posed, God willing, we will our duty in connection with our debt to the revolution and the blood of the martyrs of the revolution and consider it our duty, as far as we feel the country needs it, to take a burden on our shoulders, if we can, to advance the goals of the revolution. We may sometimes have such a feeling, but for various reasons, others may not view us in the same way. Regarding what you said, I left politics after I felt that the totality of the political movement that gained victory in the previous elections and came to the scene considered that we could not be beneficial to the country, as they think, and showed this in their positions.

I preferred to return to my main work rather than being troublesome to these gentlemen. It is very pleasant and enjoyable for us to work at something which we also consider performance of a duty, both teaching and learning, both giving advice and receiving advice; that is, being a seminary student. Hence, it was very easy for me once I felt I did not want to be a bother to these gentlemen, to turn to my main work; that is, being a seminary student. I did not have any problem in this connection, and in this regard, I did not try to avoid shouldering any burden; it was decided that the burden should be on the shoulders of others and for me to rest a bit. In this respect, too, I had no worries, and I am happy that during this period, I did not create any problem for the gentlemen.

When the issue of the Fifth Majles elections came up, many friends and many of the officials, even high-ranking officials and even some of those whom one would not have thought, asked me to participate. While I was still hesitant as to how successful I could be and at the same time was seriously worried that I had to take upon my shoulders a heavy responsibility, and that if I failed to do so, I would be accountable on resurrection day. On the other hand, it was not clear to me whether in fact the grounds for activity had been prepared to enable me to do what I am capable of. After much consultation and ultimately divination with the Koran, I decided to participate and do something, if the grounds have been made ready. The truth is that I consider the issue which is discussed today as candidacy for deputy to be a candidate, because if the grounds are prepared for me or someone else, I will use all in my power and as best I can to decide to defend the interests of Islam, the revolution, the country, and the people.

[SALAM] In your opinion, what is the difference in views of the Kargozaran and the rival faction; that is, the Jame'eh-ye Ruhaniyyat-e Mobarez [Militant Clergy Association]? Do you think this difference is fundamental? Considering that the Militant Clergy Association did not include you in its list of election candidates, how do you evaluate these differences?

[Nuri] The fact that the Militant Clergy Association did not agree to include my name on its list is because, I think, they have a series of principles and views in the framework of which I cannot be placed. Naturally, if a society has principles, it should not support individuals whom it considers to be outside its principles. Hence, it was natural and also proper for them to calculate and actually present those whom they think, in terms of criteria and standards, are compatible with theirs and to support them. A person whom they think is not within their ideological framework and criteria should naturally not be placed there, and in this regard, I thank the Militant Clergy Association for having remained steadfast in their principles and ideas, pursued what was in their interest, and despite the various pressures in connection with various candidates, perhaps including myself, only presenting the candidates they wanted.

You asked about differences, and I must point out that the issue of differences has two dimensions, one is the slogan dimension and the other the practical dimension. Sometimes, in the slogan dimension, certain issues may be stated, and each side may have some claims and make accusations against the other side, but the standard and criterion is "action," and it must be noted what serious differences these two movements have in terms of action or in practice. In the issue of action, too, many problems that exist in the society are problems that both sides believe and know about, and in many instances, the solutions that are offered are accepted by both sides and even considered inevitable. Sometimes, the priorities for one faction are one thing and something else for the other faction. For instance, a faction may say this

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issue is of utmost importance, while the second faction says it is of secondary importance. The differences are mainly in the implementation methods; there are not essential differences, even though they appear in slogans sometimes.

Of course, in general policies, there are sometimes differences between various factions that exist in the country, but there are few essential differences between these two factions to which one can be sensitive and make them appear serious, even though they exist in the slogans. Yes, there are differences in the implemental methods. One thing that now has begun in these few days, which is discussed in some of the media and in the form of widespread publicity, is, for instance, the issue of social justice, the issue of high prices, or the issue of relations with the West, and the like. These discussions must be examined somewhere to make it clear whether these are serious discussions or quarrels over government and whether the slogans are to take over the government. Once we take over the government, can we do what we wish or not? There are actually a series of slogans that are based on beliefs and are serious. If they are stated on the basis of belief, then much of what has occurred in the past shows otherwise. For example, today they raise the issue of American-style Islam and label people who up to yesterday were among the most authentic forces of the Imam's line. In fact, until the time of the imam, this accusation was made against others, and when the imam said not to with regard to those who are not inclined toward American-style Islam, the Islam of the barefooted, the Islam of the downtrodden, how was all this interpreted? How is it interpreted today?

I want to say that much of these advertisements consists of slogans, and that when we enter the arena of action, their form and examples will completely change. In other words, the same person who shouts slogans in the name of freedom will act on the contrary, and the one who is today speaking in opposition to liberalism will have liberal ideas. I think in this connection people are aware. After all, for instance, economic thinking relies on the interests of a particular stratum, and there is little discussion about just distribution of wealth. There is little discussion about the contradiction between social justice and unequal distribution of wealth. If they discuss it, they may say that development is contradictory to social justice, as we see now that some shout slogans of, development at the price of poverty, at the price of high prices. They do not say that if there are high prices and poverty, they are the result of billions-large windfall incomes that go to the pockets of some individuals, that the society must determine with whom these individuals are affiliated and whom they support, and the individuals who have huge capital are affiliated with whom.

[SALAM] In the Fourth Majles elections, you were in charge of carrying out the elections and were in charge of the Ministry of Interior. Naturally, you were not involved in the election rivalries and had a particular judgment of this issue. Now that Your Honor is yourself a candidate for the Majles, how do you see the climate of the elections? What problems do you see in them?

[Nuri] Essentially, we can look at the elections in two ways. One way is for all the officials and the organizations of government to try to prepare the grounds for leaving the fate of the people to themselves, and on this basis, a series of steps must be taken. This kind of thinking has a series of requirements on the basis of which planning must be made. Another outlook is to have what one prefers and is one's opinion in a popular form. Naturally, this also has a series of requirements and needs a series of plans. I think that in the Fifth Majles elections, the climate of the country and the actions of the officials, especially high-ranking national officials, are moving towards implementing the first form, and there is more tendency toward it. The movement that now is being implemented in this phase of the elections leans more seriously toward the first form, and this is a cause of happiness, even though there may still be problems both regarding the issue of rejection and approval of qualifications and also in dealing with the verification or voiding of elections and other more minor problems that exist in regard to oversight and implementation. The feeling is that the inclination is toward this direction. Even though some or many may have the second outlook and try with all their being to have what "they say" take a popular form, I do not think that the society is ready for such a thing, nor is this the trend in our country and government. Naturally, the expectation of the high-ranking officials must be in that direction.

[SALAM] Before the elections, the traditional right wanted to become excessively powerful in the Majles, and they engaged in a great deal of effort to do so. Now, considering the results of the first phase of the elections and the outlook of its second phase, do you think that this faction has achieved its goals, and essentially, how would you outline the composition of the Fifth Majles?

[Nuri] In connection with your first statement, we should not say that only one faction made an effort to take control of the Majles. All the factions made an effort with all their might to attract public opinion toward themselves and win in the composition of the Majles, which is natural. What is evident now, and the appearances show, is that the composition of the Fourth

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Majles will not be repeated in the Fifth Majles. In other words, we will not have a serious and decisive majority of the faction that rules the Majles today in the Fifth Majles. Of course, regarding the final composition of the Fifth Majles, one can speak after the second phase of the elections, but as far as the votes in the first phase show and as far as reasonable and moderate projections show, perhaps there is a tendency of about half of the deputies in the Fifth Majles toward the Kargozaran, and the rest are a large number of independent deputies who will come to the Majles without being affiliated with any of the existing factions, and naturally a number are affiliated with today's majority faction.

[SALAM] In the present elections of the Majles, we witnessed increased participation of the people at the ballot boxes compared to the previous term. In your opinion, what is the reason for this response of the people?

[Nuri] Essentially, we make as much effort as possible for the people to trust our actions and feel that they have the last word. People are not reluctant to be present on the scene, provided they feel that they are the decisionmakers. I think that the main reason for the increased presence of the people in the first phase of the elections was this issue. People felt that all sorts of candidates from various ideological factions and groups and even independent individuals have been able to become candidates easily. Even though the qualifications of some were rejected, on the whole, the climate was much more open for popular elections, and naturally people felt that they could be present in the elections and vote for the candidate of their choice. Hence, the most important message of the Fifth Majles elections for us and what causes the hope, presence, and enthusiasm of the people is for the people to feel that their destiny will be determined by themselves. This was what these elections also showed, which, in my opinion, played the primary role in the issue of participation.

[SALAM] In this term of the Majles elections, we have witnessed a rare if not unprecedented phenomenon, which is the voiding of the elections in several cities, especially Esfahan. Now, if the voiding is proper, it indicates social and political disorder. If the problems are with the decisions of the officials, there is room for more criticism and studies. What is your opinion regarding the voiding of elections in some cities?

[Nuri] Elections in one district may be problematic for various reasons, or it may be necessary to void them, in which case there is no room for hesitation. If they actually deviate from the proper and correct path, or in a better sense, the results do not reflect the vote of the people, their voiding is natural, and the decisionmaker, too, in accordance with the law that is ratified and implemented at the present, is the Council of Guardians. This is under the circumstances when the elections do not indicate the actual vote of the people. Hence, if somewhere the people voted and their vote is not compatible with our preference, or if there is a problem and it does not seriously threaten the vote of the people, it seems that reacting to it in the form of voiding the elections is a very grave task, and in my opinion, because the issue is the vote of the people, decisions regarding voiding must be made with utmost care because one side of the issue is that we may think there is uncertainty in the elections, and the other side is voiding the elections may result in the disappointment and despair of the people and the creation of doubt in the minds of the people. Hence, this issue (voiding) must be approached with utmost care.

In connection with Esfahan, this has happened in Esfahan before. In the Second Majles elections, too, the elections in Esfahan were voided, while five people received a majority vote, and the elections were repeated in Esfahan and the same people were elected with relatively stronger votes. People showed that the votes in the earlier phase were also their own votes. I do not know what is the particular problem in Esfahan to which there is a high degree of sensitivity, especially this time, when more than 650,000 people voted. The reasons that are offered for the voiding, before indicating that there were violations in the elections, showed that apparently there is some mandate in the elections, and it was voided because of it. I think that if the reasons were not stated, one would assume that there may have been things that we do not know. When they are stated, it shows that because of certain expectations and wishes, the people vote for a candidate deliberately. Nevertheless, perhaps because they do not have the right to vote on the basis of their wishes, then their vote must be voided. This was something new and was an action that increased the ambiguities, created a mind set in the people, and changed the sweet taste of the elections to bitterness. We hope that the Council of Guardians itself will somehow make up for this and explain this action to the people of Esfahan, so that the people will not have any misgivings, even though the explanation that was provided increased the doubt.

[SALAM] The combining of the law enforcement forces occurred during your tenure at the Ministry of Interior and was followed by opposing views at the time. What is your opinion regarding this plan after its implementation?

[Nuri] What we pursued with regard to combining the law enforcement forces was left incomplete, and I do not know what happened later. The combining of the

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law enforcement forces was an important and beneficial action which saved the people from confusion, and it also had other important goals. This was a continuous task that should have reached an end, and it was a serious issue. It was not merely a change in uniform and standardization of ranks. Rather, it was an issue of planning and organization, and many issues should have been pursued. After leaving my position at the Ministry of Interior, I do not know to what extent the issues were pursued. I hope that they were pursued and that favorable results have been achieved. While I was there, some progress was made, but after that, I do not know.

Iran: Serajoddin Musavi on Fifth Majles

96LA0274D Tehran SALAM in Persian 16 Apr 96 p 14

[Interview with Hojjat ol-Eslam Serajoddin Musavi, a Fifth Majles candidate of the Coalition of the Imam's Line forces and a member of the Majma'-e Ruhaniyyun-e Mobarez (Militant Clerics Society), by SALAM; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] Note — Continuing the interviews of the Political Service of SALAM with the experts regarding the Fifth Majles elections, in this issue, the statements of Hojjat ol-Eslam Serajoddin Musavi, a candidate for the Fifth Majles from the Coalition of the Imam's Line forces and a member of the Majma'-e Ruhaniyyun-e Mobarez [Militant Clerics Society], who has come to the second round of elections, will be presented to the readers.

[SALAM] What is your evaluation of the result of the first phase of the elections, and what is your projection of the final composition of the Majles?

[Musavi] The conditions were provided for the efforts of the officials of the regime to hold sound elections, and the admirable actions of the officials caused an increase in the number of candidates and the variety in this area in addition to the increase in the motivation and interests of various strata of the people to participate in the elections. The power of the nation was displayed with the presence of 25 million people at the ballot boxes. Of course, some problems in examining the qualifications and rejecting the qualifications of some of the revolutionary forces with good past records occurred, which should not be forgotten.

Regarding the results of the elections, it seems that committed, independent, and moderate forces with regard to positions have received more votes. Considering that a limited number of the deputies from the Fourth Majles have been reelected, it seems that the composition of the next Majles will change discernibly, including various active political factions in the country with a move away from the present exclusiveness.

[SALAM] The Jame'eh-ye Ruhaniyyat-e Mobarez [Militant Clergy Association] has warned the people in its posters to avoid voting for liberals. In your opinion, what is the reason for the use of such terms as liberal and anti-religious guardianship by this faction regarding the rival groups?

[Musavi] Of course, the reason for such propaganda must be asked of them, and they should be asked for evidence and examples. In comparing the deputies elected in the first term and the candidates in the second phase, who are also entrusted by the people, after being verified by the Council of Guardians, with the Fourth Majles deputies and the candidates of the Militant Clergy Association, I do not see a convincing reason for this claim, and there is no development to prove that the candidates of the Militant Clergy Association do not have liberal tendencies or that, on the contrary, the other candidates, especially from Tehran, who are mostly endorsed by recognized and reputable organizations, are such. Of course, raising this slogan in the second phase is a sort of disrespect for the votes of the people as well. Our Muslim people have supported and endorsed these candidates in the first phase, after the verification of the Council of Guardians, so that they have entered the second phase. It seems that the monopolistic viewpoint that thinks it has a monopoly on defending the values and religious guardianship has been the cause of the slogan. The people have experienced the results of the government of religious guardianship. The rejection of revolutionary elements by such slogans and dividing the political activists into supporters and non-supporters of religious guardianship is a sort of weakening of the regime. Those who in the general points or essential issues of the regime obey the Constitution and support the values of the revolution must not be the target of such unkindness.

The characteristics of the Hezbollah forces, the supporters of the oppressed, believers in Islamic values, opponents of foreign cultural influence, supporters of pure Mohammadan Islam, and opponents of the domination by imperialism, particularly the United States, must be identified and respect the philosophy and the law of the elections, which is the level of the votes of the people.

[SALAM] How do you evaluate the political and cultural climate of the country, and what effect will the composition of the Fifth Majles have on improving or closing and restricting this climate?

[Musavi] Because of the missions of the Islamic Republic, which is an element of hope for all the oppressed and seekers of freedom, no matter what the grounds are

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for the participation of the people, the creation of unity and coherence of the power of the nation and offering an efficient and effective model is too little. Day by day, we must go beyond the stages of growth in organization and efficiency of the political organizations and institutions and by strengthening the foundations of the regime and stabilizing the foundations of the power and legitimacy of the regime as much as possible, make the enemies despair in terms of conspiracies against and putting pressures on this sacred regime. Hence, under the present conditions, we enjoy a relatively favorable situation and must not neglect the momentous mission of the regime in spreading spiritual government, culture, and ethics.

The fruits of the Islamic revolution in the area of national unity, cooperation, belief in political and cultural ability, and unity against the enemies of the revolution are worthy of attention. They must be under more care and be promoted and institutionalized. The fact that monopolistic or impatient elements sometimes become the operators of such important issues is due to weakness in this area.

With an overview of the results of the first phase of the elections, it seems that our people support the participation of all the reputable groups in the operation of the country. Hence, the first necessary step in the Fifth Majles is to sum up the tendencies of the people in the elections and pay attention to the legitimate wishes of the people. The closeness of the political and cultural climate will silence the ideas and cause lack of participation. Hence, the political and cultural climate of the country must be open, while the principles of republicanism—that is, observing the interests of the people and the Islamic nature of the regime—are observed. In other words, within the framework of the must and must nots and the Islamic values, there must be a field of proper completion of the active forces so that when necessary and in facing the problems and conspiracies of the enemy, the necessary cooperation and unity become possible.

[SALAM] What is your opinion regarding the voiding of the elections in some districts?

[Musavi] The voiding of elections in instances that the law has been violated is obvious and has been anticipated in the law, but the culture of elections requires that necessary explanations be provided to the people and officials. Having reviewed the ideas of Imam Khomeyni and his endorsement and support for the Council of Guardians, I realized that in a place when the Council of Guardians is in charge of the responsibility of conforming the laws with the sacred religious laws and the Constitution, the imam has asked the Council to be decisive and fearless of being influenced. In the Third Majles elections, we saw that in the area of dealing with election issues, he says that it is better for the Council to be most cautious in preserving the dignity of the Islamic Republic and Islam. It appears that certain individuals from a particular faction, with the connection that they have, feel that they can implement their opinions through the authority of the Council of Guardians, and it has been heard that some elements in that faction had predicted the voiding before the opinion of the honorable Council of Guardians was announced.

[SALAM] What effect will the composition of the Fifth Majles have on the next presidential elections and the situation of the country?

[Musavi] The election of the deputies and the resumption of the Majles is one of the effects of the elections, and as it was stated in the statements of the grand leader and other national officials, the presence of the people and their further endorsement of the legitimacy of the Islamic Republic was another fruit of the elections. Since these elections are the nearest natural poll of the people until the next presidential elections, and the Majles is the center for the manifestation of the will and power of the people and the place where their wishes and preferences are presented, these elections will play a significant role in the presidential elections. The selection of ministers, making policies, and ratifying the plans and the budget of the country are among the most sensitive issues that will have an effect on the situation of the country and attract public opinion.

[SALAM] What is your opinion regarding the economic conditions of the country in general and the economic modification policy in particular?

[Musavi] By examining the economic indexes, such as the gross national product, the volume and value of industrial and food production, the level of energy, the exports and imports of the country, and the figures of the national budget, the effects and blessings of the Islamic revolution and the period of reconstruction can be well enumerated. Considering the slogans of the Islamic revolution and its responsibilities toward the deprived strata, however, we must also look at other indexes. Just distribution of wealth and people's access to the minimum educational, health, and living resources along with a thriving production and industry and prosperity are the desirable goals of our revolution. I suggest moderation. If in order to run the daily life of the people we neglect essential projects and the basis of the economy and the industry of the country, the future generations will scold us, and if in order to carry out fundamental work harm is done to the low income and

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deprived strata, we will be accused of extravagance and extremism.

Strengthening the economic ability of the country and production, spreading the culture of work and effort, prohibiting the culture of consumerism and propagating the culture of conservation, attention to the deprived strata, emphasis on the environmental and natural requirements, and rejection of non-natural prescriptions for economic improvement will help improve the economic conditions of the country.

Money and capital must be considered as tools and in the service of culture and Islamic and national values. Often, the disorder in the distribution of goods and providing for the needs of the people are due to lack of maturity on the part of the private sector of the economy in the country. This sector must in exchange for the resources, facilities, and security that it enjoys, feel responsible with regard to the resources of the people and the policies of the government, perform its duty, and not shake the economic stability of the country by being tempted by illegal interests.

Iran: Candidate Dastgheyb on Issues

96LA0274A Tehran SALAM in Persian 14 Apr 96 p 9

[Interview with Gowharoshshari'eh Dastgheyb, Fifth Majles candidate from the Women's Society and Coalition of the Imam's Line forces, by Parvaneh Mohyi of SALAM; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Boxed item] **Note—In continuing the interviews of the Political Service with experts on the Fifth Majles elections, in this issue the statements of Gowharoshshari'eh Dastgheyb, the candidate for the Fifth Majles from the Women's Society and the Coalition of the Imam's Line forces, who has reached the second phase of the elections, will be presented to the readers.** [end boxed item]

[Mohyi] First, for the young generation of the revolution to know you, please briefly introduce yourself.

[Dastgheyb] In the name of God, the compassionate, and the merciful: Even though I really am not inclined to speak about myself, because our people have been so self-sacrificing that it is fitting for them to be introduced in various ways, since you ask, I will say briefly that I was born to a clerical family in Shiraz, went to high school in Shiraz, and after marrying the late Professor Asadi-Lari, I engaged in cultural work and education while receiving my bachelors and masters degrees. At that time, the situation in the society was such that no responsible, committed, and believing individual could sit by quietly, and my family and my husband were no exceptions to this rule. By 1345 [21 March 1966-20 March 1967], they had exiled my husband three times, and from then on, we were always under surveillance until in 1355 [21 March 1976-20 March 1977] when he was arrested and jailed, and he remained in prison almost until the victory of the revolution. My presence in a political religious family and marriage to such an individual resulted in my familiarity with and entry into political issues.

From the beginning of 1348 [21 March 1969-20 March 1970], we began direct cooperation with the revered martyrs Raja'i and Bahonar, who were friends of my husband. I, who was the principal of the 'Alavi High School, began working as the principal of Refah High School. Our cooperation continued until 1350 [21 March 1971-20 March 1972] or 1351 [21 March 1972-20 March 1973], when serious problems occurred, and SAVAK arrested my husband and my daughter and later threw me in jail several times. I was a first-year Ph.D. student in theology and had to abandon my education. In 1356 [21 March 1977-20 March 1978] and 1357 [21 March 1978-20 March 1979], when prisoners were released, my husband returned. After his release, we engaged in organizational work. Of course, Martyr Beheshti made the initial invitation, and because Martyrs Raja'i and Bahonar were also released, with their help and the help of several other friends, we established the Islamic Association of Teachers. In any case, we are grateful to have had a share in the revolution and the transmission of the thoughts of the imam.

From the very beginning of the victory of the revolution, Martyr Raja'i, who was like a brother to us, proposed more cooperation and the entry on to the political scene, and he insisted that I go to the Majles.

[Mohyi] You were in the Majles for three terms. Tell us on which committees you served and with which proposals you were actively involved.

[Dastgheyb] Deputies must be directly present and involved in all issues. In fact, all deputies have a share in the ratification of laws and ultimately in proposals and bills that they ratify, but the preliminary steps are taken in the committees. In the First Majles, along with Martyrs Raja'i and Bahonar, I was on the Education Committee. In the Third Majles, I was on the Higher Education Committee. The First Majles was especially sensitive, and in order to advance the goals of the Islamic education, we offered various proposals. In the Second Majles, the preparations for nonprofit schools were presented by the government of the time, which we opposed strongly. Even though Mr. Akrami, the minister of education, and Mr. Mozaffar, the director general of education in Tehran, also opposed it, because

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the government representative defended it so strongly, the issue was discussed in the Majles and ultimately reached a vote. Unfortunately, because the bill had been set forth with a weak and small vision, and they thought that within three to four years half of the burden of the government would be placed on the shoulders of the private sector, we see that after 10 years, only 3 percent of this burden is placed on the shoulders of the private sector. Not only has the government spent a significant amount, but large loans and resources, in addition to land, houses, etc., all from the Treasury, has been put at their disposal through the foundations. All this, however, has been unsuccessful.

Regarding the effective activities in offering proposals, I must say that at that time, female deputies, given their insignificant number, had a heavier responsibility because according to the statement of the imam, women during the time of the tyrant were doubly oppressed. Hence, more efforts had to be made to eliminate their oppression. Hence, we made use of the Constitution, which in Articles 10 and 21 places proper emphasis on women. They are discussed in other articles as well, but these two articles in particular concern women.

In the First Majles, there were only two women, myself and Ms. Taleqani, and even though we were friends, we had differences of opinion. In fact, the proposals were given to the Majles by one person. At that time, we had discussions about the issues of marriage, divorce, and dowries. Of course, I have some documents. In short, what was discussed, decided, and implemented at that time is the marriage document that is given to couples today, and also obliging the performers of the marriage to read the conditions to the couple during the wedding, especially for the girls, and familiarizing them with their religious and legal rights prior to the wedding ceremonies. Although it is heard today that sometimes some of the performers of the weddings do not do it, we have obliged them in accordance with the law to do so, and failure to do so is a violation of the law.

Among our other proposals was to have a page in the marriage certificate for listing the dowry, so that if, God forbid, a problem arises, the girl will have a document at her disposal regarding the list of the dowry. Unfortunately, no attention is paid to this issue. In 1361 [21 March 1982-20 March 1983], we brought a proposal called security for women and children without guardians and asked the government to take steps regarding the insurance and welfare of children without guardians in accordance with Paragraph 4 of Article 21 of the Constitution and to present a bill to the Majles within three months because this proposal had financial burdens and had to be offered as a bill. Hence, in a single article, we obliged the government in this regard. Of course, due to the war, it took some time to present this bill.

Among our other activities was the issue of support of the children of martyrs by the spouse of the martyrs. This proposal was also brought to the Majles by me, and with the support of several brothers, especially Haj Aqa Karrubi, who was the guardian of the families of the martyrs and defended this proposal strongly, it was ratified. This was the most important thing that could be done for the children of the martyrs because separating a child whose father has been martyred from his mother is by no means proper, and this child must be raised by the mother. We thank God that this proposal also received votes.

Another issue was the bill on attaching five notes to the requirements for the election of judges, which settled the situation for female judges. With the ratification of this law, female judges can be returned to their judicial base while working in special civil courts and the Office of Supervision of Minors.

Another proposal was the creation of special civil courts because the situation of divorce and the approach of the courts to it at that time was very chaotic. It is still not very satisfactory, but it is better. At that time, special civil courts were not legally official. Hence, based on Paragraph 3 of Article 21 of the Constitution, we offered a proposal to create proper courts for the preservation and survival of families and having women advisors to the Majles in the court. This proposal was postponed for several years, but then in 1369-1370 [21 March 1990-20 March 1992] they were forced to accept it.

The next issue was the proposal for the part-time employment and service of women. Because it came with a financial burden, again after a great deal of discussion, we obliged the government to offer a bill. Many did not agree with this proposal, but since we know that many women could make use of this privilege, despite the opposition, we insisted on it.

The proposal on retirement with 20 years of work and most importantly the reform of the divorce law were other proposals. At that time, as soon as differences would occur, the couple would go to a notary public office, the office would immediately perform the divorce, and the woman would be left without shelter, resources, and support after many years of marriage. With the reform of this law, the couple requesting a divorce is obliged to go to court and receive a certificate of irreconcilibility. Inviting arbitrators and also the issue of alimony were included in this proposal. Of course, many people, even the government, opposed it.

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[Mohyi] Was receiving alimony after divorce a ratification of the Third Majles?

[Dastgheyb] Yes.

[Mohyi] Then what were the discussions regarding alimony about in the Fourth Majles?

[Dastgheyb] This matter is a ratification of the Third Majles, but because the Council of Guardians opposed it, it went to the Council for the Discernment of Expediency, and this council ratified it in this term. Unfortunately, we hear that some of the female deputies in the Fourth Majles have recorded all of these in their own names and claim that they made the proposal. Of course, the documents and the details of the discussions are recorded in the Majles, and the facts are quite evident. Among the other issues was the preliminary version of the law to establish special insurance for divorce, which unfortunately was not ratified.

[Mohyi] With your permission, we will return to the issue of the Fifth Majles elections. In this term, we witnessed the enthusiastic participation of the people in the elections. What is your opinion in this regard?

[Dastgheyb] The presence of various groups created the enthusiasm in the people. If only one group had been present, I am certain that not even half of this number who voted would have gone to the ballot boxes.

[Mohyi] In this term, we also witnessed the presence of a significant number of women who sought to be deputies and who even received more votes in some districts. In your opinion, what factors affected this issue?

[Dastgheyb] This issue must be analyzed sociologically. It has advantages and disadvantages. Its advantage is its positive reflection vis-a-vis others and in the international assemblies because we have always claimed that women themselves are not interested and active. The disadvantages must certainly be analyzed. For example, it is sometimes heard that the husbands of these women (candidates) do not agree but are under pressure and have consented for religious and other reasons. The children of young women who are small or who will be born undoubtedly will also have problems. The most important problem is the issue of campaigning. Unfortunately, some have engaged in campaigns with inappropriate posters and pictures without observing religious standards. Our people think that "woman are the honor of the society," and their presence and such advertisements are unfortunate. We may face difficult positions in this connection in the future, and this rush without thinking about it may create some tensions in the future. In this respect, I express my anxiety, but if religious standards are observed, I evaluate the presence of the women as a positive phenomenon. I must also add that we should not think that if there are few women in the Majles, for instance, all the problems will remain unsolved.

[Mohyi] Considering what you said earlier, do you not think that if the number of women had been large, the proposals that you offered that were not ratified would have received votes?

[Dastgheyb] No, I believe that not always is there harmony among women, and sometimes there are differences of opinions. Regarding sending women students abroad, we brought this proposal several times to the Majles and I defended it, but no matter how much I tried to persuade the woman who was sitting next to me in the Majles and with whom I am very close to get up and defend it, she did not agree. She is a woman, but she did not agree to vote for it. Hence, being of the same opinion is very important.

[Mohyi] What is your own motivation in this field of competition?

[Dastgheyb] I do not stand on ceremonies with or try to hide anything from the people. I personally did not intend to participate in the elections, but later said and thought that we are not within the range of the governing group and that other groups are getting ready. Hence, I did not think it advisable to sit by because I feel indebted to the people and feel responsible regarding the problems. The sense of responsibility forces a person to work and make an effort. After a divination with the Koran, I became involved in the competition, because in the Fourth Majles, the approach of the present majority group was so bad that it would drive everyone from the scene, and with accusations, they tried to push everyone aside. Of course, they could not say anything about people like me; for example, she has accumulated wealth, has made a luxurious living, drives the latest model car, or has even made use of educational resources. When a whole group is questioned, however, and when they even accuse Haj Aqa Karrubi, who is at the head of the Ruhaniyyun-e Mobarez, it is worrisome. He is not a relative of mine, but we saw what torture and hardship he suffered for this victory of the revolution. As I said, when we saw the presence of the groups in this term, in accordance with the last will and testament of the imam, we did not consider it proper to be onlookers. My motivation is to work strongly. I want to work with all my power. I feel too embarrassed by the blood of martyrs to rest for even one day.

[Mohyi] In the primary phase, the two slogans of "development" and "social justice" were seen more than other slogans, and the issue of the priority of one or

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the other was discussed. What is your opinion in this regard?

[Dastgheyb] "Development" without justice is meaningless. In other words, social justice must be in step with and even prior to it in order for development to play its role. It is meaningless, no matter how many dams and factories we have, while some have full stomachs and others go hungry. Every effort that has been made so far has been to implement justice. We have made the "justice of 'Ali" a model in the Majles. 'Ali's justice says that I cannot witness palaces being built next to countless ghetto dwellings. Hence, everyone must benefit from "development," and this is possible if there is justice. In other words, everyone should have his place.

[Mohyi] Does the issue of "social justice" that is discussed nowadays by some people really mean that those people are pursuing social justice?

[Dastgheyb] These are merely slogans because if this group believed in social justice, it would not accept "economic modification" and would not ratify the Second Plan, which causes class differences and separation in a way that an employee with a salary of 30,000 tumans lives under the poverty line. In this situation, which employee can be extravagant, which is a subject of so much discussion regularly? When the issue of extravagance and waste is discussed from certain podiums, such as the Friday prayers, I am embarrassed and feel a pain in my stomach as I see the pale faces of the people who are trying to make a living with difficulty. They have nothing to waste. In the march on Qods [Jerusalem] Day, I stood for a few minutes and watched the faces of the people carefully. The faces show that these people do not have high purchasing power. Then, what kind of waste and extravagance could they be engaged in? Social justice is only a slogan. They made commerce and capitalism widespread in a form that they wanted both traditional and modern. These are the people who endorsed all the economic policies, especially privatization, so enthusiastically and placed the factories at the disposal of incompetent individuals.

[Mohyi] What do you consider to be the most important problem in the society?

[Dastgheyb] Injustice.

[Mohyi] What programs and policies do you have to eliminate this problem and support the downtrodden?

[Dastgheyb] Creating jobs and increasing production must be taken seriously. Persuading the young to work without being embarrassed is among our efforts. With two seas to the north and south of our country, we make little use of God's blessings. In other parts of the world, the cheapest food is fish, but we only regard fish as an occasional food, and one for the rich.

[Mohyi] To decrease unemployment and control inflation, what projects do you have in mind?

[Dastgheyb] Small industries must be supported. In India, I saw that most people were involved in weaving cloth and producing the cloth they use. There, everyone is engaged in manual labor. We, too, by supporting small industries and agricultural industries, must create jobs and by producing more overcome the problems.

[Mohyi] What is your opinion in connection with foreign policy and the issue of negotiations with the United States, which is raised by some individuals?

[Dastgheyb] This is treason. From the beginning of the movement, the imam raised the issue of neither east nor west and frequently said that relations with them is like relations between the wolf and the sheep.

[Mohyi] What is your evaluation of the Fourth Majles as an outside observer who was present in three Majles terms?

[Dastgheyb] The majority group from the beginning claimed to support the president and entered the Majles with this slogan, but, because this was not the basis of their actions, from the second year, they showed their differences of opinion. Since this group had the majority in the Majles and is always fed one idea and viewpoint without individuals having a free vote and opinion, the Fourth Majles was a stagnant, passive, and mute Majles.

[Mohyi] What is your evaluation of the elections from the First to the Fifth Majleses?

[Dastgheyb] Very widespread advertisement blinded the people. For example, regarding the top two people, it is true that they received votes, but we must ask, how? Who voted for them, and in short how were these votes gathered? Only by the widespread advertisements and promises that they gave. They especially worked on the young people. In keeping with religious and moral standards, I cannot name the people and their violations. But in one word, I say, this kind of publicity is not worthy of the Islamic Republic regime. The imam announced as a religious duty that we should have an understanding of the candidates, and if we do not, we should ask trusted people. Hence, people must have an understanding and not vote for a list. They should not vote for people who enter the arena with glitter and spend millions of tumans. For what reason do they spend so much, and from what source do they obtain the money? Such a deputy is obliged to return the favor of individuals who have given him financial help. Even if such individuals spend their own money, they should be

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asked where they got it. Are they capitalists? The imam said, we are happy that the capitalists did not enter the Majles. If they have capital, the voters must know that a capitalist will not support the interests of the people.

[Mohyi] You spoke about understanding, but some of the candidates say that they do not have resources such as the Voice and Vision and the mosques and they have to advertise, otherwise, how could people know them?

[Dastgheyb] It is injustice that equal resources are not available to the candidates. This injustice of some people having all the mosques, radio and television, religious and other centers, and some having nothing must be eliminated. You saw that one night prior to the elections, Mr. Larijani, as the head of the Voice and Vision, came and spoke in support of this group. Previously, too, since three or four months earlier, several television channels were at the disposal of this governing group. Such actions will have to be answered before God. This is injustice perpetrated on others, and God will not forgive injustice.

[Mohyi] Recently, the issue of changing the election laws and inclusion of the requirement of "good reputation" as a qualification for candidates has been discussed. What is your opinion in this regard?

[Dastgheyb] This issue was not without a background. For instance, it has been said that candidates should deposit several million tumans as collateral. How many candidates have such amounts of money? Which candidate could give up his money? Those who are prepared to pay such money know certainly that they can collect it elsewhere. Regarding "good reputation," too, if the people decide—because people are free and capable of thinking and understanding—it is fine, but if the Council of Guardians is going to decide, then no, because the Council of Guardians cannot be the people's deputy.

[Mohyi] Considering that you received votes in the primary phase of the elections, of which spectrum do you consider yourself a deputy?

[Dastgheyb] The downtrodden and those who have given martyrs. I thank God that whatever votes I received, even this small amount, came neither from posters and advertisement nor resources that were provided by others. Everything came from these noble and downtrodden people.

[Mohyi] Because I did not intend to turn this into a discussion of so-called women's issues, I did not address women's issues. As the last question, however, I will ask, if you enter the Majles, except for the law on establishing social insurance for divorces, what proposals do you have in connection with women?

[Dastgheyb] Regarding the Articles 10 and 21 of the Constitution, we must still be active. What has been done is not enough, and women have not been given material and spiritual protection; that is, for a woman to be able to arrange her life with ease of mind and to have a secure future, laws must be devised for this purpose; in particular, work must certainly be done regarding inheritance. In this regard, there is a difference of opinion between earlier and recent religious jurists. For instance, the fact that women cannot inherit land must be examined and dealt with. Some religious jurists think to the contrary. In the Third Majles, we were working hard on this issue, but we did not have the opportunity to continue the work. In the same way that we dug out the issue of the nurturing of the mother (the spouse of the martyr) and the issue of the wife receiving the husband's salary from religious jurisprudential books with the help of some jurists, such as Mr. Khalkhali, we must also work on this issue. Regarding the salary of the martyrs, some of the gentlemen were quite opposed to it and said that the mother should take care of the child, but the money should be under the control of the father of the husband. Is it possible for a woman to be able to take care of her children properly without receiving a salary?

[Mohyi] My questions are finished. If you have something to add, please do.

[Dastgheyb] People should alertly, carefully, and with knowledge of the past and present of individuals and their actions find out who should go to the Majles and not vote for those whose hearts are pledged to foreigners and are grateful to them, the effects of which, unfortunately, we see. In my opinion, we should only rely on God and return to ourselves in order for God to bestow his grace on us. Perhaps the greatest benefit for a deputy is that the deputy be independent regarding voting and resolve of action.

[Mohyi] We thank you for participating in this interview.

[Dastgheyb] I thank you, as well.

Iran: Publication Right Revoked, Papers Warned

96LA0279C London KEYHAN in Persian 23 May 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] **SALAM Newspaper and KIYAN Magazine Receive Written Warnings**

The Press Supervisory Committee in its last session revoked the publication rights of PAYAM-E DANESHJU, which was previously called PAYAM-E DANESHJU-YE BASIJI. The Supervisory Committee explained the

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reason for the closure of the journal as its being contrary to Islamic standards.

PAYAM-E DANESHJU was closed the first time following complaints by Mohsen Rafiqdust, his deputy Ruzbehani, and several others. The Press Supervisory Committee also gave written warnings in the same session to SALAM newspaper and KIYAN Magazine, which are published under the management of 'Abdolkarim Sorush.

Iran: 'Outlaw Democratic Grouplet' Claims Attack in Mahabad

LD2507194296 Tehran IRNA in English 1904 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sanandaj (Kordestan), July 25, IRNA — The outlaw democratic grouplet has claimed that its forces killed two Iranian soldiers and injured three others last week during a conflict in the Gavark area of Mahabad city in West Azarbayjan Province. In its radio broadcast aired from Iraq which was monitored here last night, the grouplet claimed that the conflict broke out after a speech in the Mazhgeh village by one of the so-called officials of the grouplet.

It added that its assailants returned back to their bases in Iraq without any losses after the operation. The claim of the outlaw grouplet could not be verified since no official could be reached for comment.

Iran: Tehran Municipality's Head of Security Arrested

LD2507190696 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 21 Jul 96 p 15

[Unattributed article: "Head and Deputy Head of Security Department at Tehran's Municipality Arrested and Dismissed"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Following several court sessions at Tehran's General Court No. 26, the head and deputy head of the Security Department at Tehran's Municipality were dismissed and arrested for the illegal use of government property, illegal surveillance, illegal arrest and detention of individuals.

The Public Relations Office of the Judiciary at Tehran Province said the two were accused of interference in the affairs of the law-enforcement and intelligence, eavesdropping, arrest, and detention of individuals without legal warrant, and the illegal use of government property during the elections.

Following several sessions, the court condemned the head of the security to 15 months' imprisonment and six months' dismissal from service, and the deputy head to the payment of a 1-million rial cash fine as an alternative to imprisonment and a six month suspended prison sentence standing for three years.

Iran: Shiraz Deputy — Hezbollahis Should Manage Universities

LD2507215596 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 21 Jul 96 p 2

["A First Step Toward Islamization of Universities is to Delegate Management to Hezbollahi Forces:" report on interview with Dr. Ahmad Nejabat, Shiraz deputy to the Majles] [FBIS Translated Excerpt] Legal and Majles affairs: The first step toward the Islamization of universities would be to delegate key and management posts to hezbollahi forces. This was announced by Dr. Ahmad Nejabat, a [Majles] deputy from Shiraz, in an interview with our correspondent. He said: Following the important remarks which were made by the eminent leader, it is expected that more responsibilities will be delegated to expert forces and those who believe in Islam and abide by the principle of velayat-e faqih [guardianship of the supreme jurisconsult].

He stressed: Currently there are many hezbollahi people and experts working at higher educational centers, but committed forces have been subjected to injustice in recent years and they have been pushed aside under various pretexts.

Dr. Nejabat said the Islamization of universities means the rule of the the rich Islamic culture over all issues relating to universities and higher educational centers. He pointed out: The Supreme Cultural Revolution Council should perform its duties more seriously and adopt fundamental and dedicated policies in order to implement the guidelines of the eminent leader on the Islamization of universities.

The people's deputy from Shiraz said: One of the basic steps toward the Islamization of universities is to have forces who are committed and believe in Islam. He said: According to the eminent leader, the lecturers who are not committed to Islam but dedicate their lives to teaching in the area of their expertise should not face any kind of problem.

Responsible departments should deal with those who are hostile to Islam and the Islamic system and those who propagate the theory of the separation of religion from politics and those who confront religious students. Religious students went [to the Iraq-Iran war]. They should get rid of hostile elements in universities without delay or standing on ceremony.

In the continuation of the interview, he called for the review of the contents of university curricula, and said: One of the elements that can speed up the Islamization

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of universities is for universities to have continuous link with religious seminaries nd use the expertise of the great seminary scholars. [passage omitted]

Dr. Nejabat said: The enemy intends to instill doubt and create deviation among the young generation, particularly students. Therefore, I call on university managers and the offices of the vali-ye faqih to arrange question and answer sessions, in which prominent scholars and scientists take part, in order to respond to the negative insinuations of the ill-wishers.

In conclusion, the deputy from Shiraz said: Some of the basic principles of management are precision, bravery, and not being influenced by negative propaganda and blackmail. There may be hostile elements who wish to obstruct the path to the Islamization of universities. [University] managers should follow this path by relying on devout, committed, and revolutionary lecturers and students, and implement the instructions of the eminent leader as soon as possible.

Iran: Universities Cannot Meet Needs

96LA0279B London KEYHAN in Persian 23 May 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] The first phase of the nation-wide 1375 [21 March 1996-20 March 1997] Entrance Examination of the Universities and Higher Education Institutions of Iran was held on Thursday and Friday last week (16 and 17 May) in 225 cities and six areas outside the country.

The results of the first phase will be announced in the first 10 days of Tir [21-30 June], and the second phase will be held with three times the ultimate capacity of the universities, that is, 300,000 people, on 12 Mordad [2 August].

Based on statistics published in the newspapers of the Islamic Republic, in the first phase of the nation-wide university entrance examination, 1,178,891 applicants registered, of whom only 100,000 (that is, about 8.5 percent) will enter the universities, and 1,078,891 unemployed high school graduates will be added to the number of young people in the country without a future.

Iran: SAFF News, Events Reported

96LA0201A Tehran SAFF in Persian 21 Dec 95 -20 Jan 96 pp 50-52

[FBIS Translated Text] **Swearing-In Ceremonies for 40th University Student Cycle at Tehran Training Center 01**

The swearing-in ceremonies and the epaulette celebration for a number of obligatory service students in medical programs and in programs for masters degrees, bachelors degrees, and post high school certificates were held at Tehran Training Center 01. In attendance were Brigadier General Sayyad Shirazi, acting chief of the Armed Forces General Staff, and a group of military commanders.

In these ceremonies, Brigadier General Sayyad Shirazi addressed the personnel undergoing training and those in attendance. He said: My dear children, you enthusiastic, concerned, and committed youth, must remember that your first priority is to be thankful for the blessings God has given you. You must thank God that there is no longer any sign of the oppression and the darkness of the idolatrous regime. We, the cadre personnel of the Armed Forces, welcome you, and we accept you in our embrace as our brothers and children.

58th Zul-Faqar Army Maneuvers

In implementing the commands of the exalted leader and commander in chief of the Armed Forces, and also the measures taken by the infantry command, the 2d Brigade of the 58th Zul-Faqar Army held maneuvers in the municipality of Shahrud. These maneuvers lasted three days, the final stages of which were conducted with the support of air force fighters and swift air force aircraft in the presence of general 'Ebadat, acting infantry commander, Semnan Province political officials, military and police commanders, the exalted families of martyrs, and wounded veterans.

These maneuvers ended with the completion of all the designated goals and with complete success.

First Multi-Purpose Infantry Shooting Range Opened

The first multi-purpose shooting range (for light, air, and combat rifles) was opened by General Dadbin, commander of the infantry, at the Infantry of the Islamic Republic of Iran Athletics Compound.

This range was built according to international standards. In addition to meeting the needs of the Armed Forces teams and other clubs, it is ready to serve the public.

Those wishing to register their names may report to Infantry Athletics Compound No 1 at Harr Square on Combat University Street.

Azerbaijan 21st Hamzeh Army Around the Clock Clinic Opens

Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Imani, chief of the Infantry Ideological Political Directorate, took part during a trip to Azerbaijan in morning ceremonies for the

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personnel of the 21st Hamzeh Army of Azerbaijan at Tabriz. Addressing the personnel of this army, he said: The stationing of this army in this hero-nurturing land has strengthened order and security in this part of our army.

He also took part in the opening ceremonies for the around the clock Azerbaijan 21st Hamzeh Army Clinic. This clinic will offer pharmacological, dental, and internal medicine services, shots, bandages, and ambulatory surgery with full medical equipment. Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Imani also opened the Brigade 3 Qur'an Society of Marand.

Air Force Kowsar Birth Anniversary Celebration

On the joyous birth anniversary of Her Holiness Fatemeh Zahra (peace be upon her), the splendid ceremonies for the occasion were held with the participation of the women employed in this force.

Attending these ceremonies were Pilot General Baqa'i, commander of the Air Force, Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Shahid-Mahallati, chief of this force's Ideological Political Directorate, and a group of clergymen and military commanders. After readings from the Glorious Koran and the singing of anthems by the Mehrabad Regional Air Force Girl's Youth Group, Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Shahidi gave a speech. He discussed the value and the place of women before and after Islam and said that the selection of this day as woman's day is an indication of the importance and the valuing of the place and position of women in our country.

According to the same report, at the end of these ceremonies, prizes were given by the Air Force commander to exemplary workers in various areas of specialization.

Air Force Koran Teacher Training

The first preliminary two-week training cycle to train teachers of the Glorious Koran were held at the Prophet Mosque of this force's staff, attended by 20 outstanding Army Air Force readers.

The Public Relations Office of the Air Force Ideological Political Directorate reports that these classes were formed to raise the quality of the Koran readers in Koran concepts, reading fluency and voice, tone, and reading.

Azerbaijan 21st Hamzeh Army Combat Engineering Commander Martyred

Colonel Yunes 'Oyubi, commander of the Hamzeh Martyr of Martyrs 21st Army Combat Engineering Battalion, was martyred on 8/13/1374 [4 November 1995] while clearing mine fields left by the Ba'thist forces in the 'Eyn-e Khosh region of Ilam.

The funeral rites were held for this martyr's pure body, attended by Ayatollah Mojtahed Shabastari, the vice regent's representative in Azerbaijan, the Friday Imam of Tabriz, the exalted clergy, army and national officials and a large gathering of the Muslim and martyr nurturing people of Tabriz. After prayers were held, he was taken to his place of birth and interred there into the ground.

On the same occasion, ceremonies to honor this great martyr's memory were held at the Azerbaijan 21st Hamzeh Army Mosque in Tabriz.

Several Service Projects Opened at 4th Fighter Base

The Public Relations Office of the Air Force Political-Ideological Directorate reports that Pilot General Baqa'i, the Air Force commander, visited the various parts of the Dezful Air Base and opened several service projects such as hospital operating rooms, the cultural complex, the ice plant, the laboratory for the base middle schools, the Star Hotel, and the fruit orchard.

Based on the same report, the commander of the Air Force gave the keys to two residential homes which had been built by base personnel for the families of two deceased personnel to their families.

Educational and Propaganda Services Performed

To enrich the free time of the children in the families of the resident personnel, and to cultivate their potential talents, the Educational, Ideological and Political Complex in the Shiraz Air Force District has set up educational, ideological and sports classes.

Based on the same report, more than 1,000 students have participated at various educational levels in classes in the Koran, Arabic, English, theater, anthems, design, painting, calligraphy, elementary and advanced computers, music, swimming, combat exercises, and sewing.

Students at Air Sciences and Technology University Stage Play

The allegorical play "In the Wind," the work of the students at the Air Sciences and Technology University, has been accepted for competition and opening at the 10th National Student Theater Festival.

This play was written by Abol-Fazl and Ramzyar and was directed by Mohammad Hamzehzadeh.

Kuhak Base Holds Combined Morning Ceremonies

In observance of 7 Azar [28 November], the anniversary of the Navy of the Army of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Army Navy force, and the Revolutionary Guard held joint morning ceremonies at Kuhak Base. These were

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attended by Rear-Admiral Shamkhani, commander of the navy, Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Ahmadvand, chief of the Ideological Political directorate, the acting commander of this force, and the guidance commanders of the Revolutionary Guard Naval Force and the Army of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

At these ceremonies General Admiral Shamkhani gave a speech offering congratulations on 7 Azar, Navy Day, and Basij Week. He named personnel from the armed forces as the ones who made history recently in the region.

Elsewhere in his talk he said: The blood that was shed on 7 Azar 1359 [28 November 1980] laid the foundation for a proud tomorrow for the Navy of the Army of the Islamic Republic of Iran. This has weakened the enemy at our nation's maritime borders.

At the end of these ceremonies, the participating forces paraded in front of the glorious Koran and the reviewing stand.

Pakistan

Pakistan: Foreign Office Spokesman Says CTBT Must Be 'Universal'

BK2607043296 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 0300 GMT 26 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistan has reiterated that the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty [CTBT] must be both comprehensive and universal. A Foreign Office spokesman said in Islamabad yesterday that the entey-into-force provision of the treaty requires ratification by all nuclear weapons states and nuclear capable states for it to become effective. He said if India decides not to ratify the CTBT, it would have effectively sabotaged the treaty as it would not be enforceable. The spokesman said Pakistan supports the total elimination of all nuclear tests, without any exception, and has welcomed the efforts to conclude negotiations on CTBT by 1996. It had participated constructively in the negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

He said Pakistan has made it adequately clear that CTBT will have no meaning for South Asia if India is not brought on board. However, the spokesman said Pakistan will endeavor to ensure that all its concerns regarding the substantive and technical aspects of the CTBT are fully covered in the text of the treaty. He said Pakistan's decision to sign or not to sign the CTBT would be taken at the appropriate time after taking into account the position of other countries, specially our region.

Pakistan: U.S. Ambassador Wisner's Kashmir Remarks Criticized

BK2507144396 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 24 Jul 96 p 6

[Article by Mir Abdul Aziz: "Frank Wisner's 'Sermon' at Quetta"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Frankly speaking, Mr. Frank Wisner, the American Ambassador to India, from the very beginning has adopted a pro-India stance problems of the South Asia subcontinent. When he presented his papers to the Indian President, he said in categorical terms in New Delhi that there was no dispute about Kashmir and that Kashmiris in Occupied Kashmir should take part in the elections which the Indian government wanted to hold there to revive the so-called 'political process'.

The statement of the American Ambassador to India prompted me to write an article in Pakistani English newspapers with the title 'Frank Wisner toes the Indian Line'. Other writers also reacted sharply, particularly in view of the fact that this utterance of the American ambassador was not only against realities, but also ran counter to the American policy, which denotes that Kashmir is a disputed matter and it is to be resolved between India and Pakistan according to the wishes of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Now I have before me a copy of the speech he made, nay, a 'sermon' he gave to the assembly at the Command and Staff College of Pakistan Army at Quetta. He has spoken of the nuclear capabilities of Pakistan and India and has desired that both countries should shun the nuclear option. He has tried to bracket India and Pakistan together in the matter, too, forgetting that India has already exploded 'a' nuclear device 22 years ago near the border of Pakistan. Pakistan has always been clamoring that South Asia be declared a nuclear-free zone. It is India which is the stumbling block in the path. India is not also ready to sign the CTBT. [Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty] Pakistan's nuclear program is peaceful. At least this part of the ambassador's speech should have been directed towards India only.

Talking of his meeting with the Indian Prime Minister in context of the Pakistani Prime Minister's offer of talks he says that Mr. Deve Gowda will meet sincerity with sincerity.

It is gratifying to note that his excellency realizes that Kashmir is the main apple of discord between the two countries of the subcontinent. But in the 17-page long speech, he has not suggested any way out. All that he

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wants to be done, is to push the issue of Kashmir under the rug.

It is on record that after making his very much pro-India utterance on Kashmir in the Indian capital, last year he went to Kashmir and tried to win over the leaders of the APHC [All Party Hurriyat Conference] in favor of the Indian scheme of elections to the legislative assembly of Indian held Kashmir. He even assured them that if they wanted to fight elections and did not submit affidavits saying that Kashmir was a legal part of India, their nomination papers for the elections would not be rejected.

The question arises: Who was he to give such an assurance? It could be given only by the Indian government or the Election Commission of India. That the American Ambassador in India should extend such an assurance makes the whole exercise more suspicious.

The APHC leadership in Kashmir, however, did not succumb to such overtures and made clear that they are not ready to participate in any electoral exercise within the Indian constitution, that they want their right of self-determination according to the UN charter and relevant resolutions of the United Nations. He has said that regarding Kashmir, it would be best that the example set by Pakistani and Indian leaders at Tashkent and Simla be followed. He has not mentioned the UN Security resolutions and the UNCIP [United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan] resolutions which constitute India-Pakistan agreements on Kashmir, supported and confirmed by the United Nations. It seems that his excellency did not want to displease the Indian government which, wants the world to forget that there was any international decision to hold a plebiscite in Kashmir to determine the future and the accession of the State.

Yes, the Simla Agreement is there and Pakistan stands by it. But it is India which is wriggling out of it, as it wriggled out of UN resolutions. Recently the Foreign Minister of India, Mr. Gujral said that the Simla Agreement supersedes UN resolutions. This is travesty of truth, plain and simple. Article 103 of the UN Charter, in the clearest terms, says that when there is a conflict between agreements arrived at between two nations with the agreements in the UN, it is the UN agreements which would prevail. The Secretary General of the UN also said the same thing, with reference to Article 103, in the context of Kashmir but Indians still continue to say that the Simla Agreement undo the UN resolutions on Kashmir.

Would Mr. Wisner realize and make his Indian friends realize, that the very first operative sentence of the Simla Agreement says that relations between India and Pakistan would be according to the UN Charter?

Would he realize that the Simla Agreement does not negate the right of self-determination of Kashmiris as the respective positions of Pakistan a India on Kashmir are not adversely affected by the Simla Agreement and the Line of Actual Control? India's position is that the entire State of Kashmir is part of India and Pakistan's stance is that the entire State of J&K [Jammu and Kashmir] is disputed and its future is to be decided by a plebiscite under the UN.

What is more, the Simla Agreement lays down that the heads of the governments of Pakistan and India will hold talks for the 'final settlement' of the outstanding issues like Kashmir. The words 'final settlement' indicate that the issue of Kashmir was not settled prior to the Simla Agreement or in that agreement.

For the last 24 years, one quarter of a century, Pakistan tried that India should hold meaningful talks with her about the issue of Kashmir. India first evaded meetings and whenever they were held, India reiterated its assertion that there was no Kashmir question now and that Pakistan should vacate the free part of the State, which the Indians call Pakistan held Kashmir, be handed over to India. Narasimh_ Rao said on 15th August, 1994, on the independence anniversary of his country, and BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] Prime Minister Mr Vajpayee said that his country would even go to war with Pakistan in order to snatch this part of Kashmir from Pakistan.

The American Ambassador has given 'tidings' that India desires to offer 'maximum autonomy' to Kashmir, and the Indian government's offer speaks volumes about the spirit of the Kashmiri people, who have demanded that their voice be heard — a cause Pakistan has espoused.

Would Mr Frank Wisner please note that the demand of the Kashmiris is not maximum autonomy within India, but the full-fledged right of self-determination. Yes, India had very reluctantly given autonomy to Kashmir when the Indian constitution was frame and when there was an agreement in Delhi in July 1952 between the prime ministers of India and Kashmir, Nehru and Abdullah respectively. But this autonomy was shattered to pieces when Abdullah, the self-proclaimed architect of Kashmir's accession to India, was ignobly dismissed on 8th August 1953, and jailed for five years, then rearrested and detained for many more years. The autonomy of Kashmir was curbed by India during these years and the present position of Kashmir is that there is not even a puppet legislature since 1990 and the only legislator of Kashmir is the Indian President, who has assumed powers to legislate for Kashmir and execute the same through his nominee, the Indian

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Governor of Kashmir. The autonomy envisaged in early fifties provided for state President who was elected the prime minister. Even Pandit Nehru was not sincere in allowing Kashmir 'internal autonomy.' When a delegation of Hindus from Jammu met him in 1962 under the leadership of Prem Nath Dogra and urged him to abolish Article 370 of the Indian constitution which they said was against India's integrity. He asked them not to worry and assured them that the article would erode with the passage of time and a day would come when the article would remain on the Constitution only in name. That time has surely come and Kashmir has become a colony of India.

There is evidence that Americans are grooming Farooq Abdullah, to receive the new edition of autonomy, which his father had achieved and was ultimately deprived of it. Farooq told weekly CHATAN Srinagar that he had been assured through Robin Raphel that internal autonomy was the American solution of the issue of Kashmir and that he would be backed by America in this connection. He did not participate in the Lok Sabha elections but it is hoped that he would partake in the State Legislative elections. But Indian leaders have categorically said now to him and to all others: Let elections take place, we will then discuss the issue of autonomy with the elected members of the assembly.

The Indian Election Commission and the government have announced that elections in Kashmir will take place in four phases in September. The election schedule is yet to come. In the meantime Maqbool Dar the Kashmiri Minister of Internal Security of India, has said in Srinagar in a press conference that Farooq Abdullah is a 'nobody' and the Indian government would not talk to him about the autonomy.

This seems to be the beginning of the end. Farooq, probably on advice of his American friends, did not participate in the Lok Sabha elections and missed the bus. All the six seats were 'won' by India-based political parties and not by any regional party. It is clear now that in the state assembly elections also, the national level parties of India will take part and Farooq and his party would be left in the lurch. He is not sure to get any seat in Jammu province and Ladakh. The seats in the Valley may be divided between the National Conference and the parties like Janata Dal, Congress-I, and even BJP.

For most of the time since the dissolution of the Kashmir Assembly (January 90) Farooq remained away not only from Kashmir but also from India. Thus he may not fare well in the elections in September. The question of reviving institutions like 'State-president' and 'Prime Minister' and limiting accession of Kashmir to India to Defense, Foreign Affairs and Communications, may prove to be a dream, a pious wish. Indian parties (barring BJP) may allow Article 370 to remain, to hoodwink the people of the world that Kashmir enjoys autonomy, but that autonomy would not be worth the paper on which it would be recorded.

As regards the people of Kashmir, they are with the APHC, which gives vent to their aspirations of self-determination. The Indian government maintains army and security forces totaling more than seven hundred thousand in Kashmir. The population of Kashmir being seven million, it means that there is an Indian soldier on the head of every ten Kashmiris. How can election be impartial and fair. Mr Wisner has also mentioned the efforts of the Indo-Pakistani people's Forum and the Neemrana [expansion unknown] initiative. He probably does not know that in all the four or five meetings called by the Forum, no Kashmiri from Occupied or Azad Kashmir was ever invited. As regards the Neemrana initiatives, unrepresentative and handpicked individuals, have mostly attended them from amongst the Kashmiris. This is worse than the Camp David and the Oslo moves. He has also talked of a Pakistani and Indian poet. I wish he had tried to know the sentiments of a Kashmiri poet also. Kashmiris cannot abandon their freedom struggle for a mere song or two, or a poem or two. He wants to bring the sufferings of the Kashmiri people to an end. Noble sentiments indeed. But sufferings cannot come to an end by advising the sufferers to endure what cannot be cured. Not once in his speech has the ambassador mentioned the United Nations, whose Hqs [headquarters] are in America, and whose permanent member India aspires to become with American assistance. His excellency seems to be unaware of the circumstances which led to the division of the subcontinent into Pakistan and Bharat. He seems to be unaware of the treatment which the Muslim minority of Bharat is receiving from the ruling bosses of India. Muslims are less than one percent in the armed forces of India and in the civil administration, their number is less than two percent. Indian parties like BJP are out to impose man-made laws on the Muslims of India, whose polity, economy and everything is based on Divine Laws enunciated in the Holy Quran. Muslims want peace, but not forced peace or the peace of the graveyard. The very word Islam means peace, peace with God and with his creation. After all these 48 years, how can the people of Kashmir forget and shelve their struggle for freedom for an undefined autonomy, which can be and has been undone by Indian imperialists with the stroke of a pen? According to the Prophet of Islam (PBUH) a Muslim is one who is not bitten from the same hole twice. How can the Kashmiris trust India which has, like a cobra, bitten them not once but many

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times? If India could, brazen-faced as she is — wriggle out of UN resolutions, the UNCIP decisions, the Simla Agreement and the like, why cannot she throw the proposed autonomy, which is yet to see the light of day, to four winds?

To suggest that Poets in the two countries should speak of peace, sounds like the 'Sermon on the Mount', but far from the world of reality. The reality is that forty thousand Kashmiris have been done to death and an equal number maimed, dishonored during the past years. This is the figure quoted in his press conference by minister of State for Internal Security Maqbool Dar of Southern Kashmir, in his maiden press conference at Srinagar, let Pakistani and other estimates of the casualties in Kashmir alone. And of what worth is internal autonomy, which has no international guarantee? What about the two million refugees of Jammu and Kashmir who have been driven out of their homes since 1947 and are living in Pakistan and elsewhere, hoping that they will return to their homes? If Jews return to Palestine after 2,000 years, the Kashmiris have a greater right to go back home with honor. Their citizenship of Kashmir is testified by the State Subject Act of 1927 of the Kashmir Government, by the UN Security Council Resolution dated 21st April 1948, the UNCIP resolution dated 5th January 1949 and last but not least the legislation of the Kashmir legislative assembly under the guidance of Sheikh Abdullah in 1982 and Farooq Abdullah in 1983.

Issue of Kashmir involves the lives, interest and aspirations of the people living in 84,471 square miles area of the planet called Earth and this cannot be brushed aside or pushed under the rug by platitudes, nice talk, stereotyped and hackneyed phases and sermonizing.

Kashmir and their supporters the Pakistanis expect better things from the countrymen of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. It is worth noticing that not all Americans think alike. There are Americans like Dan Burton, who likens the Kashmiris struggle to the American war of Independence against England.

Pakistan: Indian Kashmir Election Plan Seen Against Talks Prospects

BK2507114396 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistan has condemned the acts of Indian forces to intimidate and eliminate the Kashmiri leadership in occupied Kashmir and stressed upon the international community to take notice and urged India to end repression there. A Foreign office spokesman told newsmen in Islamabad today that following the decision to hold farcical elections for the state assembly in occupied Kashmir, the Indian Government has stepped up its campaign of repression and intimidation against the people of occupied Kashmir and their leadership. He said during the last one week, Indian forces have murdered three leaders — Ghulam Rasool Mir, Hilal Beg, and Naim Khan. The spokesman said such tactics cannot diminish the resolve of Kashmiris fighting for their right of self-determination as promised to them by the international community through UN Security Council resolutions.

Answering a question, the spokesman said the announcement of elections in occupied Kashmir by India has not helped in promoting an atmosphere for resumption of foreign secretary level talks between Islamabad and New Delhi.

Pakistan: Agreement Reached With India To Stop Firing Along Border

BK2507073296 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 0300 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistan and India have decided to tighten measures to eradicate smuggling and illegal crossing across their borders. The decision was taken at a three-day meeting of Pakistan Rangers and the Indian Border Security Force in Lahore yesterday. The meeting also discussed barbed wire fencing in Sialkot sector and joint patrolling in different areas. The two sides agreed to stop cross firing along the border to allow civilians to continue their work in their respective villages.

Pakistan: Bhutto Criticizes Israeli Presence in Lebanon

BK2607055096 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 0500 GMT 26 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has criticized continued Israeli presence in Lebanon and said as long as Israel considers its presence to be justified, the violence will go on. In a syndicated column captioned: A Lasting Peace in Lebanon, she advised the Israeli leadership to move beyond its self-created notion that it can only assure its security by bending other nations to its will. The prime minister said it can make a good beginning by ending its aggressive posture, including occupation of southern Lebanon. The prime minister called upon the Israeli leaders to seek a just and comprehensive peace by laying down foundation of understanding with the Lebanese people.

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Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: Troops Reportedly Enter Mullaitivu Camp From South

BK2607061296 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 26 Jul 96

[Received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Troops clearing the base, are moving in slowly and cautiously due to booby traps laid by Tigers in an effort to delay and inflict casualties among troops, reports said.

The Tigers continued to fire mortars. Clearing operations will have to continue for a few days since the base extends to about 4 kms to the north, official sources said.

"The beach head established South of Mullaitivu camp, continues to facilitate the passage of urgently required resources required by the troops operating ahead. In the meantime, The Sri Lanka Air Force Aircraft continue to take on terrorist concentrations in close proximity to the Mullaitivu camp. The Sri Lanka Navy continue to patrol the sea off Mullaitivu and ferry men and material to the beach head," a defence ministry statement said. [passage omitted]

Sri Lanka: LTTE Denies 'Any Involvement' in Train Station Bombing

BK2507162396 (Internet) Tamil Eelam News WWW in English 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt]

The LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] Denies Involvement in the Colombo Bomb Attack

A statement issued from the LTTE headquarters has categorically denied any involvement by the LTTE in yesterday's (24 July) bombing incident at the Dehiwala railway station.

The statement adds: "We wish to point out that even though the accusing finger is pointed by the government on the LTTE, there are interested parties within the Sinhala ruling establishment who feel the need to raise chauvinist hysteria in order to facilitate the military option; particularly when the Sinhalese people themselves are losing their patience with the government's war efforts.

"We also wish to reiterate that it is not the policy of the LTTE to attack civilian targets."

More Details of Yesterday's Aerial Bombing

The detailed information on the yesterday's aerial bombardment on the town of Mallavi has been received today. On the 24th of July at about 11.15am 2 Kfir jet fighter planes belonging to the Sri Lankan Air Force carried out a bombing raid on the thickly populated suburban town of Mallavi in the Vanni Tamil mainland. The high explosive bombs dropped by the Air force fell near the Mallavi junction which is the commercial area of the town. 6 civilians including a 2 year old child were killed on the spot. A private educational institution was also damaged by the bombing and 3 female students attending the classes were critically injured. They are now in Kilinochchi hospital. A father and a son who were working in their bicycle repairing shop in front of the institution were among the dead. In all 20 people have been severely injured and their chances of survival is very slim. Details of the 5 people dead are available but the sixth body is mutilated beyond recognition. [passage omitted]

News From Mullaitivu Battle Front

There is no significant development in the battle situation at Mullaitivu today. In spite of heavy mortar fire, Sri Lanka has massed 2000 troops on the beach-head about 2km from the Mullaitivu camp. Troop reinforcements are now consolidating their position in preparation for a major counter-offensive. The camp has been completely over-run and now under the total control of the LTTE. The LTTE fighting units are well positioned with heavy weapons to meet the imminent offensive which might take place soon. Sri Lankan Air force bombers, helicopter gunships and naval gun boats have been seen attacking LTTE positions. But LTTE casualties are minimal.

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